

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS.

SPECIAL SUMMER ISSUE

Out on the Town
with Ken Hom, Lili Maltese,
Ivana Trump and friends

How London
Keeps its Cool
by Henry Porter

Giles Worsley explores
the new County Hall

Summer 1998

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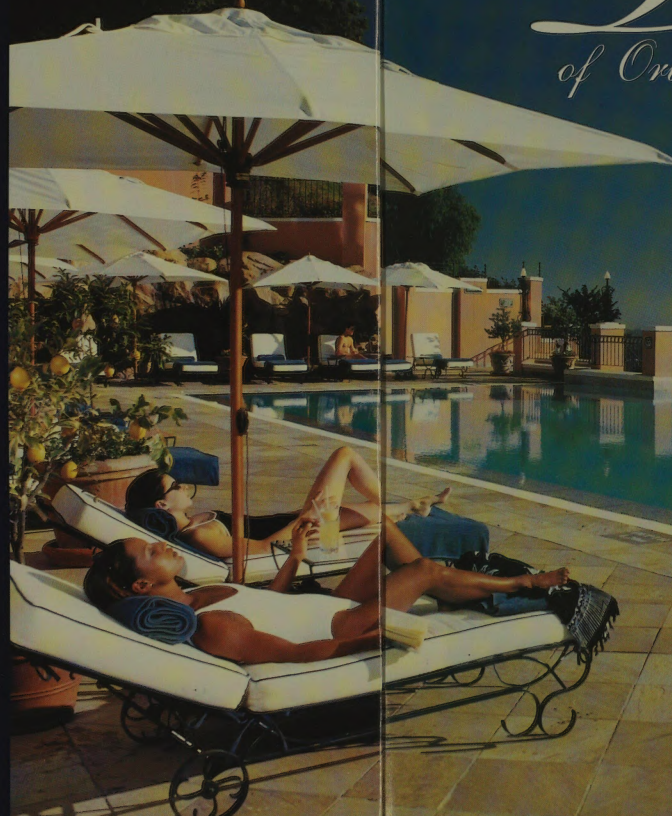
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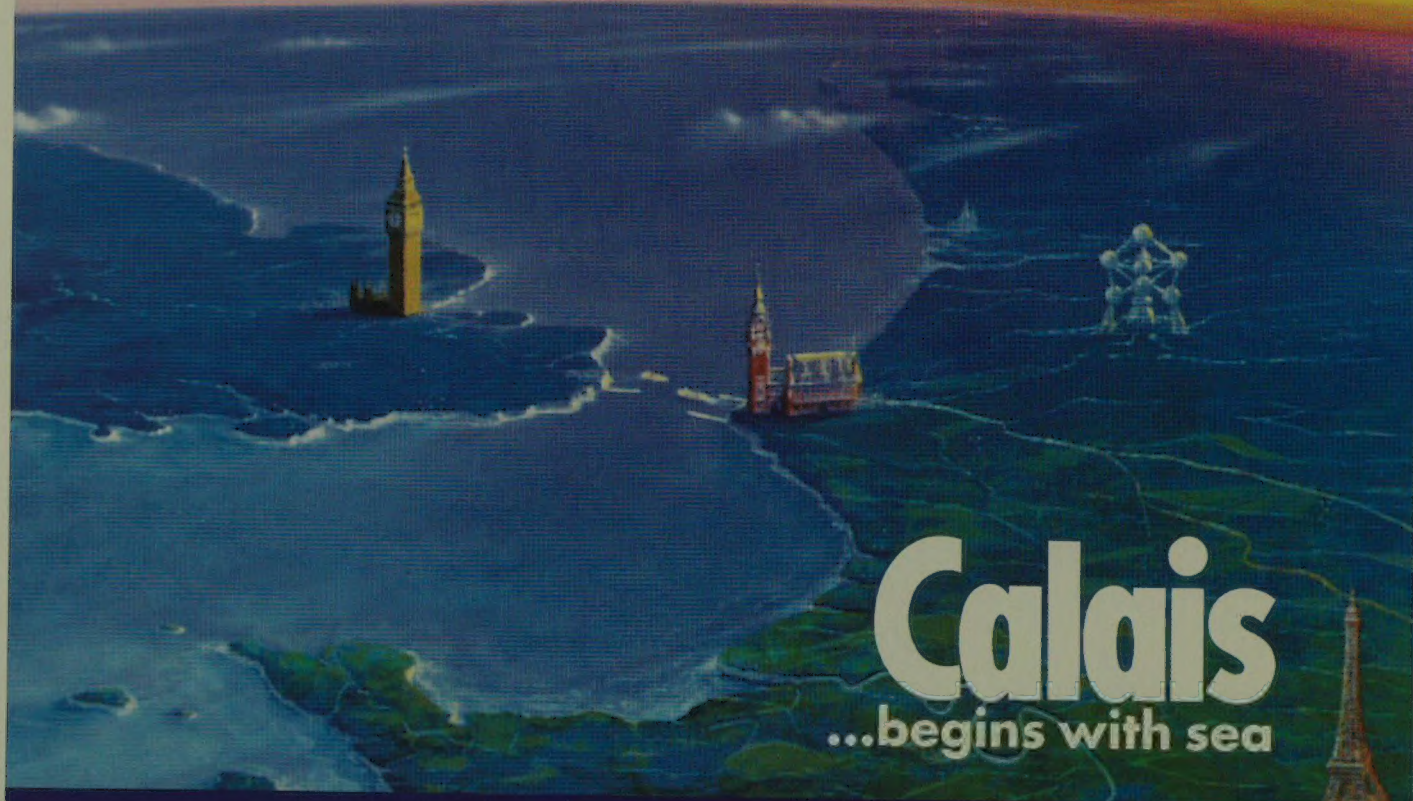


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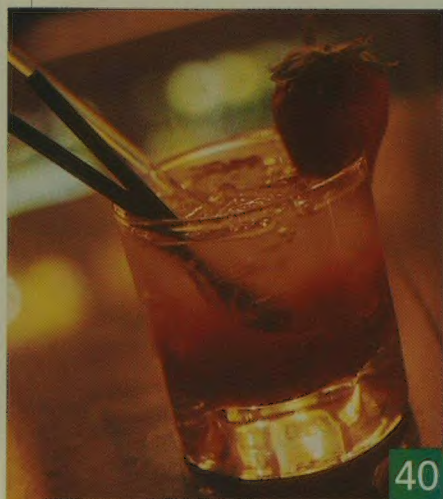
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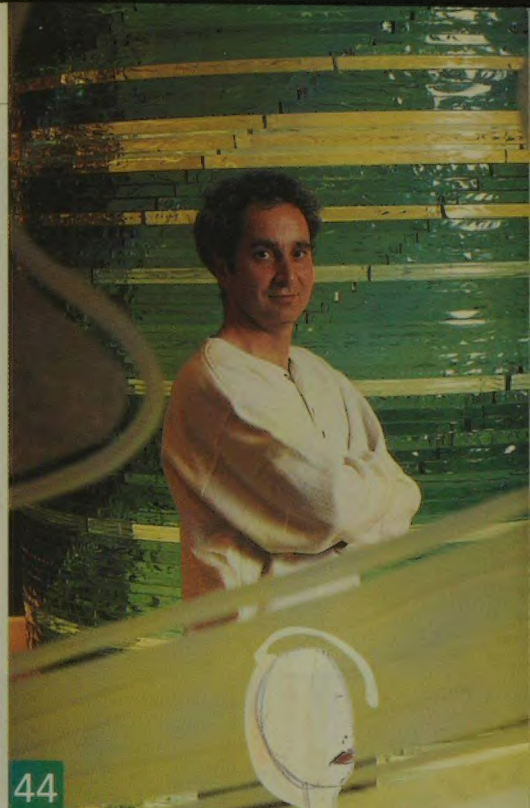
Strawberry Caipirinha is a favourite cocktail at the Havana in Hanover Square, a hot spot noted for its wild decor.



Cover: Paul Massey/FSP photographs Caprice in full Ascot attire.

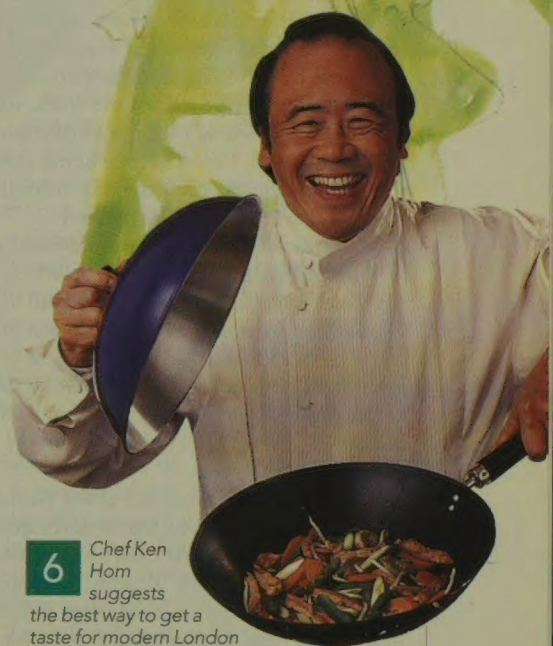
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The England they LOVE

What is it that keeps overseas visitors flocking to London? Nicola Tyrrell asked eight foreigners why they prefer summer in and around the city.

EUROPEAN CAFÉ SOCIETY

"I have never understood why people want to get out of London during the summer. I grew up in New England, where the sun rises later and sets earlier than over here, so I always think it's delightful when the season changes and it starts getting light so early. It encourages me to get up and do some work, and I know I have a whole evening of daylight to look forward to. I used to love being able to stay out in the evening to play softball in Regent's Park—until it was banned.

"As an arts lover, I find the South Bank one of the most pleasant places to be when the sun's out. The walk from County Hall to the Globe Theatre must be one of the best in the world: it's a great place to be if you want to follow the progress of the monuments and follies of the future. Every time I'm down there, I notice a new architectural feature on the other side of the river.

"I remember coming out of the National Film Theatre and seeing a new development of flats. My mind flashed back to a sign on the motorway just outside Boston, Massachusetts, that says: 'If you lived here, you'd be home now. I go to the South Bank a lot so I thought, why not live here? And now I do.

"In summer the mood definitely changes. You're down by the river, the streets are full of all sorts of people and there's a Continental atmosphere. Perhaps, because the overriding emphasis of the area is on the arts rather than commerce, it manages to be festive but civilized, and it's never rowdy or boisterous.

"I have lived here for 23 years and I still don't think there is anything that you can pinpoint to sum up the English way of life, as there are too many different kinds of people. London is the most cosmopolitan city I know, and with each summer it turns more and more into a European café society.

"There are so many great summer events but the Proms is top of my list—which ever night you go, you'll hear a good concert. And there is one thing that I would recommend all



Paul Gambaccini enjoys the South Bank "monuments and follies" such as William Pye's "Zemran", by the Queen Elizabeth Hall.

summer visitors to do: head over to SW1 and stroll among all the landmarks such as Trafalgar Square, Admiralty Arch and Buckingham Palace. You can walk the whole way, so you're out in the open: you may think it is clichéd, but it is clichéd for a reason."

Paul Gambaccini, broadcaster

JUST WALKING IN THE PARK

"As bureau chief for the Mainichi newspaper, I had two postings in London for a total of 13½ years. I always felt most at home and most relaxed in the summer because the warm weather would remind me of Japan. I loved to walk on Wimbledon Common or in Richmond Park—they both have a natural beauty which to me is very typically English, much more so than somewhere like Hyde Park, which I find too artificial.

"One thing that always struck me in summer was the way people go out to the park just to walk. My mother once visited me and kept asking where all these people were going. Because the Japanese people work so hard, people of my mother's generation have never had the time or energy just to walk. For the Japanese this is a strange English habit.

"I think the English character is changing. Like the samurai, the English stiff upper lip was always the mark of a gentleman, of adulthood. But I think people in England are losing it, and therefore becoming more childish. The younger generation is beginning to show its emotions—look, for example, at the mourning over the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. I think this kind of public show of emotion is a symptom of crisis in society, of a move from a social system based on aristocracy to one founded on meritocracy. Perhaps the reason for this is a change in education: because good education teaches more people of all classes, the teaching itself has less emphasis on creating leaders, so people are no



Clockwise from top left: Czech-born Ivana Trump, socialite and author of divorce manual, "The Best Is Yet To Come"; Trude Mostue, Norwegian star of the docu-soap, "Vets in Practice"; Paul Gambaccini, swapped his New York roots for a Thameside flat; Raymond Seltz, one-time occupier of 24 Grosvenor Square; Toru Kuroiwa, who sees traces of the samurai in the British stiff upper lip; the cosmopolitan Lili Maltese, born in Hawaii, who married Henry Dent Brocklehurst this summer; Ken Hom, Chinese American from Chicago who made the wok a household name; and Australian Pat Cash, winner of the men's singles at Wimbledon in 1987.

longer taught to be true gentlemen in the samurai sense. "But it is not just the people that are changing. Walk around the Conran shops or restaurants in London and you can see where Britain is going. It is becoming a bridge between Europe and the United States, and it is developing into a new culture, which becomes more obvious in summer. Change in itself is good, but will the young generation destroy the old traditions or make use of them to create something new and positive?"

Toru Kuroiwa: author of the Japanese bestselling book *The English Way of Life*

ECCENTRIC STYLE

"There is so much energy in London during the summer. I could spend days on end just walking and exploring. I love strolling around my favourite areas, Kensington and Knightsbridge, which are full of little shops selling unusual things—everything from old leather luggage to antique cigar holders. They're fantastic, even if you can't afford anything.

"I used to say that English people didn't really enjoy warm weather unless they left the country, but a few hot summers have given them a more southern-Mediterranean attitude. They seem 10 notches happier and the formality has gone, even in the City—you still see people dressed well, but they won't necessarily be wearing a tie. Like the way Londoners in general have their own individual modes of dressing in summer. They are stylish in an eccentric kind of way, compared to somewhere like Paris, where people rigidly conform to the latest fashion.

"I visit London up to 12 times a year, and when the weather is nice I often go over to the Tate Gallery, not just because it has a restaurant with a great wine list, but because there are some really innovative things going on in the art world at the moment.

"I think London is at the forefront of modern change. It is as if the 60s explosion is happening all over again and it is suddenly a fun



Above left, Toru Kuroiwa feels that Richmond Park—open to the public since the mid-18th century—exhibits typical English natural beauty; the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, above right, held every year since 1769, reveals the powerful imagination of the English for Raymond Seitz.

place to be, which is something I certainly never would have said a few years ago.

"The best way to get a taste for modern London is to try the food. I would go to a Conran restaurant for lunch; my favourite in summer is Le Pont de la Tour at Butler's Wharf. You can sit out on the terrace next to the Thames. It has a unique ambience, and the food is a true reflection of how far British cooking has progressed in recent years. There is also a fabulous wine shop next door that I can never resist visiting!

"Until recently London did not take much notice of its river, but now more sites are being developed along the Thames, and I think Londoners are beginning to realise that nothing beats being next to water when the sun's out. But if you want to see a real example of how attitudes in London are changing, just go into the City, the bastion of the true British character, and go to a Pret a Manger café. On a nice day you will see bankers in their suits eating sushi in the open air as if it was the most natural thing in the world. Now that is something you would never have expected to see in the UK!"

Ken Hom: chef

EVERYTHING ON YOUR DOORSTEP

"When the summer arrives in London, it feels like liberation after a long, chilly, dark and gloomy winter. The flowers come out, the days are long and lingering, and there is a kind of druidic feel as everyone comes out of their little holes. One of my favourite summer haunts is Kensington Gardens, where I faithfully walk my dogs. If you go in the fresh, early morning, it is absolutely delicious.

"The most wonderful thing about London is that everything is so concentrated on your doorstep. For an American, it is a bit like having New York, Washington and Los Angeles all rolled together with a bit of Disneyland thrown in. In summer the city is always more upbeat than usual, but I think London is actually changing over time. When I was posted

here for the first time in the 1970s, you could still get a laugh if you made a joke about English food or clothing, or even about British uptightness, but it doesn't work any more.

"People seem to have loosened up. I don't think this is because they themselves are essentially changing, but rather circumstances are bringing out different aspects of their character. London is seeing people from the first generation in several centuries that is not divided on the traditional grounds

of class, begin to move into positions of authority. I think the effect of this is a more comfortable adjustment to Britain's place in the world, and a new confidence.

"The sense of irreversible decline has disappeared, and with it the sense of a class system—although the actual idea of class is certainly still around. You can still see this at sporting events such as

Henley, where there is something typically English about watching people sweat as you sit back eating strawberries.

"The Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy is something I always enjoy. Because it opens its doors to all kinds of artists, you know there is going to be something new each time you go, and one of the most prominent things I have noticed about the English people is their powerful imagination. Perhaps they have it because they are a little bit reserved, so more things go on in the mind, but it expresses itself in other ways than art.

"Look, for example, at the pageantry of the monarchy or the theatre. The London stage may be less vibrant than it used to be, but it still has a lot to offer compared to Broadway, which has become like live television. At the moment there is a handful of very talented young playwrights in London who are definitely worth seeking out, but do be warned—if you are thinking of going in summer, make sure the theatre is air-conditioned, or you will hear the flapping of play bills all the way through the performance!"

Raymond Seitz: former US Ambassador

A BUNCH OF LITTLE VILLAGES

"Last June I went to the Louis Vuitton Classic Car Show at the Hurlingham Club and after the show there was a dinner and dance. I remember there were these huge fairground rides, with everything from bumper cars to a blow-up castle spread around the club grounds. I couldn't believe that it was all laid on for adults—the guests were playing like children, jumping up and down and going crazy in their dinner clothes. One of the funniest things to watch was a kind of *Gladiators* event, where people stood on a platform and bumped each other off with big poles.

"I think it was the extravagance of it all that got to me—the beautiful cars, the champagne and black ties. I had never been to anything like it before, but somebody told me it was like a typical Oxford May Ball. I found it quite an experience, because in the US people dress up occasionally but never really wear dinner jackets with little bow ties.

"I have lived in many cities, including New York, Paris, Milan, Madrid and LA, and I have been in London on and off for the past five years. In good weather, it is by far my favourite place. I think it's because people don't take themselves too seriously, and it is not as manic as New York. There is a balance, with lots of culture and entertainment, but it is also sufficiently relaxed for people to feel that they can live their lives as they want. The English can be a bit odd, wandering around in their smoking jackets discussing the weather, but they are more real than Americans.

"You've just got to walk through Hyde Park on a sunny day: it is the most amazing place on earth, with everybody smiling, chatting and sitting outside pubs. London seems to turn into a bunch of little villages, each with its own high street. My favourite part of the city is Notting Hill Gate, where I live, probably because it is bohemian and laid back, and has lots of little food shops and good restaurants. I love to stroll around Portobello Market looking for things to buy, and, of course, the highlight of the summer is the Notting Hill Carnival. It is just the wildest thing!"

Lili Maltese: Hawaiian-born model and wife of Henry Dent Brocklehurst



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Above left, the breathtaking sight of hundreds of hot air balloons over the Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol evokes summer for Trude Mostue; Bohemian Notting Hill, where she lives, is Lili Maltese's favourite area, and the carnival in August, above right, is "Just the wildest thing".

A RELAXING PACE OF LIFE

"I have lived in England for eight years but most of my summers up to now have been spent studying behind a desk, so I am only just beginning to discover what the season here is really all about. Now that I am a practising vet in Bristol, I manage to get out and about during the day.

"One event that always triggers the feeling of summer for me is the Bristol International Balloon Fiesta in August. People from all over the world arrive with all sorts of funny-shaped hot-air balloons, and they take them up very early in the morning when the weather is at its coolest and calmest.

"It's strange to be driving to work and see the whole sky filled with these odd shapes of all different colours, floating above the houses in the morning light. It's a beautiful sight—and one that makes me realise that I'm sure to have an unusually busy day at the surgery. We always get lots of dogs being rushed in because they've been chasing after a balloon and hurt themselves, or because they've panicked and jumped up a chimney. For some reason West Highland Terriers are the worst!

"Another great event that takes place in Bristol is the Community Festival, which is held at Ashton Court in July. It's like a massive gig and picnic rolled into one, a bit like Glastonbury but on a local scale.

"One thing I have observed about summer in England is that the whole country seems to slow down. People relax and simply enjoy it, compared to my native Norwegians who go ballistic because their summer is so short and they feel they have to make the most of absolutely every second.

"I notice the change of pace when I visit friends in London and we go for a drink in Covent Garden, where everyone is sitting outside, watching the jugglers and the street entertainers and taking it easy while they have a pint or two. There is only one thing I find strange. Why do people insist on putting on their skimpy shorts and tops as soon as they see the sun, even if it is still cold enough to wear an anorak?"

**Trude Mostue: star of BBC1's
Vet School and Vets in Practice**

THE FRIENDLIEST BIG CITY

"The highlight of the London summer season has to be Wimbledon fortnight. Not only is it the best tennis tournament in the world—and the one event that I always dreamed of competing in when I was young—but it has such a unique feel. There is something typically English about playing on grass courts, and about the way the public are so polite, and so knowledgeable. I love the way they queue patiently to get into the grounds and, unlike other tournaments, they don't shout out for their own country's players all the time. Perhaps it's because Wimbledon is very much a club—as a competitor you sometimes feel you are taking part just for the members' enjoyment! The facilities at the courts are pretty poor, so Wimbledon village becomes the focus of off-court activity for the two weeks of the tournament. There is generally a very good team spirit: we meet up at the Fox & Hound pub or the local Indian restaurant. The village has a cosy atmosphere—you bump into somebody you know wherever you go.

"I first got to know London when I was 16 and playing in the junior tournaments: I've always found it one of the friendliest big cities in the world. It is certainly one of the most beautiful in summer because of all the gardens—and, I have to say, because of all the pretty girls that appear out of nowhere. Where do they all hide during the winter?

"Through Wimbledon I got into the way of life in London and eventually decided to stay here. I now live in Fulham, mainly because it is convenient for Wimbledon and the airport, and for the Queen's Club where I train and often practise with Greg Rusedski. I also love being so close to Bishop's Park, where I go running, or take my sons for a walk. And it's a treat to be so near to the river, which is one of the most charming things about London. I love to stroll down to the River Café for Sunday lunch, where I can sit by the water, eat good food and relax with the family."

Pat Cash: Wimbledon champion

A GREAT MEETING PLACE

"I always make sure I am in London for the summer social season. It is the most magical time of year. I have a pied-à-terre in Knightsbridge and it's in June that you will find me in residence. I love all the parties, the balls, the charity events—not to mention Trooping the Colour, the Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition and, of course, the Ascot races.

"I love everything about Ascot: the tradition, the history, the pageantry. It is wonderful that hundreds of years of glamour are preserved—it is so very English. For me, part of the fun is in dressing up and travelling there, but most importantly I love bumping into my friends from all over the world. Ascot is like a giant mixer with everyone all togged up with the sole aim of having a good time. And, of course, it is one of the most glorious settings you can imagine.


"When I have time to spare, I visit the Grosvenor House Art & Antiques Fair—there are always irresistible things to buy. And what would a visit to England be without tea and croquet on the lawn, without tennis at Wimbledon, watching a polo match or visiting the West End?

"One of the main reasons why the summer season is so very important to me is because London becomes such a great meeting place. I never go to a restaurant, club or event without bumping into someone I know. And I love browsing around the shops looking for frilly dresses to wear to all the elegant parties.

"I definitely think the English unbend a little when the weather improves. Two summers ago the sun never stopped shining and it was so much fun to see people outside, catching the summer rays. It really proved to me that the English temperament is transformed by the warmth of the sun. As a general rule the English are very solid and dependable people, but they are also fun-loving and kind. In summer these qualities are enhanced by a lively and lighthearted mood."

Ivana Trump: socialite and author

"I simply love everything about Ascot: the tradition, the history, the pageantry"

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The STYLE Merchants

Difficult to define, impossible to fake, style informs every facet of our lives from clothes to interior decoration and accessories. Jo Foley provides a taste of the trends for this summer's dedicated followers of fashion.

WEDDING BELLES

Neil Cunningham makes wedding dresses to die for—floaty, dreamy, romantic and downright sexy. Remember Fionn Hague in her figure-enhancing flourish of satin with a fishtail train? “People are turning away from the traditional rather stiff gowns to much simpler styles such as straight sheaths with a twist,” he explains. “You simply cannot end a dress with just a straight hem,” he says “it has to be curved or swathed to give the dress life and elegance.” The idea of a sleeveless dress on a bride is enough to make him shudder. “Arms, particularly at the top, invariably need help: my solution is to cover them up.”

Cunningham has been drawing and designing dresses since he saw his first bride as a child. At the age of 16 he enrolled at fashion school where he gained the technical skills to cut and construct his own clothes. Having no idea how to set himself up in business, he started out simply making dresses for friends. Then one day, aged 21, he walked into Liberty's with a stack of dresses on his arm and promptly sold them all. The rest, as they say, is history.

But you do not have to be a blushing bride to own a Cunningham gown: he also designs delectable cocktail and evening wear. This summer's collection is inspired by the mid-60s, “very Jackie O!”, he explains. Look for A-line skirts, simple tops and clever little jackets. “Of course, we are using plenty of the ubiquitous pink this summer's ‘must have’ colour—which is very flattering to English complexions.” Cunningham's favourite is a shade he describes as being “the colour every little girl wants for her first lipstick, a sort of electric rose”. In either crêpe or cibolene (a silk similar to dupion, but without the slub) he matches this with an astonishingly wearable bright lettuce green or, for the faint-hearted, a lilac crêpe.

His long evening dresses are grand and formal, but are given a fresh touch by these fabrics, while the cocktail dresses and suits are pure, ageless elegance. For the less flamboyant, Cunningham includes a mouth-watering summer navy, rather like a light sapphire, which has been the stalwart of the Englishwoman's wardrobe for most of this century. But in his hands it looks as new as tomorrow.

□ Neil Cunningham, 28 Sackville Street, London W1. Tel: 0171-437 5793.

Float into summer in a Neil Cunningham creation, inspired by shades of lettuce green, light sapphire and the hot favourite, shocking pink.



A WHOLE BAG OF TRICKS

Bags of style is an epithet tailor-made for **Lulu Guinness**. Just four years after setting up in the fiercely competitive fashion business, with only a foundation course at art college behind her, this innovative handbag designer had two of her creations selected for the V&A's permanent collection.

Her Florist Baskets are now her signature style and no new collection is complete without a variation on this theme—a bag in the shape of a flowerpot with exquisite silk flowers appearing to grow out of it. This summer they are joined by a sweet little butterfly embroidered evening bag made especially for Debenhams. Whatever the shape or form of her creations, they are never ignored.

The raison d'être of a Guinness handbag is not simply to act as a container. It is a seriously feminine accessory which makes a statement in its own right. The bags simply

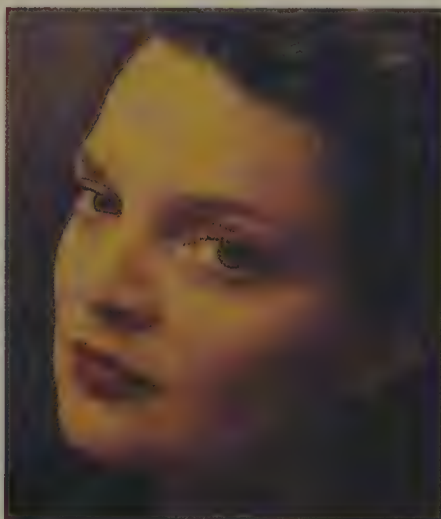
reek of old-style glamour whether fashioned from the finest calfskin or the heaviest silk. Even the collections she now makes for high-street stores have the same combination of chic and care. All of Guinness' fashion bags are handmade in the UK and she has found and nurtured her own team of embroiderers dotted around the English countryside.

Her output is sold through two shops in London—Selina Blow in Elizabeth Street and her own salon in Ledbury Road. In addition, she exports to New York, Hong Kong, Tokyo and most major European cities, and designs for Christian Lacroix and Clements Ribeiro. Her private clients include Elizabeth Hurley and Judi Dench who carried a Guinness clutch to this year's Oscar ceremony.

"I love retro glamour, but I like to mix this with a very 90s approach," says Guinness. "My bags are whimsical, quirky but very pretty." She could add that they are also astonishingly tiny. One of this summer's favourites is a clutch made of exquisite French furnishing fabric which stands no more than 12cm high. Yet while keeping its shape it still holds everything you might need for an evening out—keys, credit card, lipstick, money, powder compact. It is made in a number of colourways and brocades and costs around £240. Charlotte, a similar style but with handles, comes in a stunning array of satins and taffetas in black, green, lavender and pink—and is priced at £250.

Pink is, of course, the season's favourite shade and Guinness has it in every fabric and shape—including a real shocker. Nowhere is it more appropriate than in this summer's version of her flowerpot—a pink satin confection covered with silk clover.

□ Lulu Guinness, 66 Ledbury Road, London W11. Tel: 0171-221 9686.



Lulu Guinness' Clover bag, above, a stunning pink satin confection, £245. Below, Amanda Little advocates stretching for a natural high.





A CUT ABOVE

For over 20 years **Nicky Clarke** has taken his scissors to some of the world's most famous heads. Everyone from Goldie Hawn to David Bowie has had their hair styled by this star crimper; among the clients who regularly enter his salon in London's Mount Street are the Duchess of York, Anthea Turner and Jemima Khan. "Most women want real-looking hair and a style they can manage at home. What I aim to give them is a look which has all the fullness of a set but the softness of a blow-dry," he says. His approach is a novel one—to ensure that clients never appear as if they have walked straight out of a salon. But this carefree attitude and casual look does not come cheap—£250 for the first appointment and there's a three-month waiting list.

This season he is promoting styles which emphasise what he calls "multi-texture". This could mean a mix of tight curls with looser waves; a layered update of the boyish bob complete with blunt, choppy fringe; or pre-Raphaelite cascades of loose waves woven with rickrack plaits. As for colour, Nicky is definitely in the red—from palest strawberry to vibrant copper. But if blonde is your passion than he suggests chunky bleached high-lights spaced widely apart.

Clarke's salon now features on London's tourist beat, and busloads of foreign visitors trundle along the road outside, ogling at this temple of glamour. Trading on his celebrity, Clarke has produced his own range of products, Hairomatherapy, as well as hairdryers and other styling equipment. Now, those who can't make it to Mount Street, can create their own carefree Clarke image back at home.

□ *Nicky Clarke, 130 Mount Street, W1.
Tel: 0171-491 4700.*



Softly waved on top, shaved and severe at the sides, the new look from Nicky Clarke.

STRETCHED TO THE LIMITS

Amanda Little has the sort of body that you would expect of a fitness expert and trainer—taut and toned. As the proprietor of one of the capital's most desirable health clubs—Green's in Kensington's Royal Garden Hotel—and co-proprietor of London's exclusive fitness emporium, 101 Harley Street, this woman practises what she preaches.

A successful model during the 80s, Amanda was so horrified by the extremes to which some of her peers would go to keep slim and shapely that she began to study nutrition and fitness, quickly realising that one should treat the whole body and mind together. She therefore studied many different disciplines including nutrition, stress-management,

exercise and acupuncture, and now specialises in integrative and holistic training.

However she has more sense than to expect lesser mortals to duplicate her dedication. Her advice is sensible and down to earth: if you can join a health club, do, but if you cannot, it is not the end of the world. There are other ways to keep yourself fit and healthy.

"If you do nothing else, stretch," she says. "Make sure every part of you from the tips of your toes all the way to the ends of your fingers is stretched thoroughly. Do it before getting out of bed in the morning; it helps make you more flexible and releases chemicals within the body to give you a natural high."

The other main exercise she emphasises is

"the crunch" which strengthens the lower abdomen. "This is important because it improves your posture and helps eliminate back problems." Lie on the floor, supporting your neck with your hands. Tilt your pelvis right in to the floor to support the lower back. Now bend the knees and bring towards the chest. Slowly lower first the right leg almost to the floor, hold and return. Repeat with left leg. Begin with five each leg and build up to 20. Stop if you feel any strain on your lower back.

If all else fails, she suggests you get a dog: "You will get loads of exercise and there's the added bonus of meeting other dog owners."

□ *Green's, Royal Garden Hotel, 2-24 Kensington High Street, W8. Tel: 0171-937 8000.*



Paula Pryke, mistress of the bouquet, above. Solange Azagury-Partridge, below left, and her 18-carat red gold "spider" ring, below right.

FLOWER POWER

Paula Pryke is the woman who turns a bunch of flowers into a fashion statement and a posy into a near work of art. In addition to running her tiny shop in Islington, she is flower consultant for Sainsbury's, is completing her third book, works with the recently established Virgin Brides and is favoured by Sir Terence Conran to provide floral ideas for his restaurant empire.

All of this is very good going for someone who has no formal training in floristry and gave up her job as a teacher just 10 years ago with a view to doing "something different" with her life. Right from the start her simple, yet incredibly modern, creations began to capture every design accolade a florist might crave. And, in a neat piece of symmetry, she has recently returned to teaching by setting up her own London flower school and taking off on extremely successful lecture trips to the United States and Japan.

One way to give your flowers an instant new look for summer is in your choice of colour. "Pink is back in fashion," she declares. And it comes in every shade from mauvey-lilacs to the palest whisper of rose. "Arrangements are now much simpler with scented flowers such as sweet-peas, stocks and lavenders."

So say goodbye to dark reds, browns and burgundies and welcome summer with flowers from a sunny garden. Keep them simple but strong and if you must have leaves, ensure that they are large and architectural. "There are some wonderful roses around: look out for Limona, Vendelle and Delilah," she says.

Wedding bouquets are softer with smaller posies and wired bouquets of delicate flowers such as stephanotis and jasmine. Whatever your arrangement, the cardinal rule remains do not mix species. You may mix colours, but the flowers must be of the same genus.

□ *Paula Pryke Flowers, 20 Penton St, N1. Tel: 0171-837 7336. For information about her classes, telephone 0171-837 7373.*

THE JEWELS IN THE GROVE

Style icons and fashion gurus from all over the world make their way to a tiny shop in Westbourne Grove. With the floor covered in leather and the walls in velvet, it resembles nothing so much as a jewellery box with tiny gold cases exhibiting gems set in bold designs. This is where to find the work of **Solange Azagury-Partridge**, part of the extraordinarily talented French Moroccan clan which includes cousins Jacques the dress-designer and Joseph the show-creator.

Although she worked for the costume jewellers Butler and Wilson and then art dealer Gordon Watson, Solange had no formal training in jewellery. It was only when she could not find an engagement ring she liked that she decided to design her own. The resulting enquiries encouraged her to set up as a designer in 1990. Now her pieces are sought out by such luminaries as Madonna.

Her signature style is large gemstones set in great swathes of gold to make magnificent necklaces, bangles and rings fashioned after



those worn by medieval popes. "I don't have any prejudices about stones—whether they are precious or semi-precious, whether or not they are flawed. And as for the semi-precious variety, why should we give them that label? Just look at the bright orange of a fire opal: no gemstone ever gives you that incredibly beautiful colour," she says.

However she has recently begun to work with the most precious material of all diamonds. "They are a major change for me, mostly because they are smaller and I have to



treat them in a more delicate fashion." She sets them in red gold in almost skeletal, minimalist designs. "It must reflect my age," says 36-year-old Azagury-Partridge. "There comes a stage in every woman's life when she craves a diamond. I reached that moment and that is when I began to work with them."

But she still creates exquisite designs using semi-precious gems and dreamy translucent enamels. Prices start from £1,000.

□ *Solange Azagury-Partridge, 171 Westbourne Grove, London W11. Tel: 0171-792 0197*



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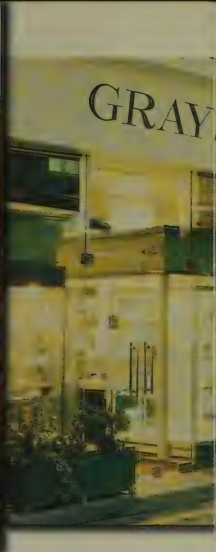
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Antiques in action

Every June, a buying frenzy descends on London's antiques shops and auction houses. Join Madeleine Marsh, of BBC2's *Antiques Show*, to discover where dealers and connoisseurs will be shopping—and for what.

This June, London can expect to welcome no fewer than 11 million foreign visitors who will spend some £670 million during their visit to the city. London's antique dealers are determined that a substantial proportion of them will return home with something more than just a plastic snowstorm of the Houses of Parliament. So this year they have grouped together to launch "London in June"—a programme of 87 "significant" events that should enhance what is already known as "The Season" for art and antiques shopping. For those seeking a piece of fine, 18th-century furniture, a painting by Picasso or a set of first-edition Winnie-the-Pooh books, this is the month to be in town. At the top end of the market, all the major auction houses are hosting their most prestigious sales, there

are five world-class antiques fairs, and every gallery within a taxi ride of Harrods is showing off its finest wares.

Whether or not you are a collector, a visit to one of the big June antiques fairs is as much a part of the social circuit as Ascot or Wimbledon, and it's not just the objects that glitter. Private View night at the Grosvenor House Art and Antiques Fair is like *Hello* magazine in 3-D. At this, one of the world's top antiques fairs, objects range in price from around £100 to more than £1 million. At the Olympia Fine Art & Antiques Fair (its closest London rival in terms of prestige) a quarter of the 400 exhibitors will be showing items worth up to £100,000.

The British Antique Dealers' Association predicts that in June alone, an astonishing £100 million worth of art and antiques will be

sold on the London market, many of the items to overseas visitors. "People come from across the globe purely to buy antiques in London," says BADA chairman, Anthony Preston. "At this time of year, all the best things gravitate to the capital and dealers save their star pieces for the fairs. Collectors are proud to buy from somewhere like Grosvenor House, where every item has been vetted by leading experts to provide a provenance that is a mark of quality recognised across the world."

London in June is also regarded as the focal point of the world's book calendar, and this year's Antiquarian Book Fair has more than doubled in size. "It's the Wimbledon of book fairs," enthuses Adrian Harrington, chairman of the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association. "You can find everything from medieval manuscripts to modern first editions."

Though items have been known to sell for as much as £500,000, Harrington is keen to stress that prices begin at around £20 and that the fair is open to everybody. "You don't need to be a professor or an academic. If you like golf, there will be books on golf; if you're a food fanatic, there are cook books; and everybody loves the children's section." Each piece is guaranteed by the association and, with 146 exhibitors in one place, prices have to be competitive. As Harrington says: "You can buy with confidence: if someone tells you it's a first edition, it is a first edition. The fair is also a great place to gather information. Dealers are more than happy to talk to you often the only problem is stopping them!"

The big fairs might initially seem intimidating, but they are there to be enjoyed. For me, one of the highlights of last June's Olympia Fine Art & Antiques Fair was trying on a magnificent 19th-century diamond tiara, worth £150,000. The dealer must have realised that I was unlikely to buy but, recognising a passionate jewellery enthusiast, he was happy to let me play and he provided a

fascinating discourse on the history of jewellery. Did you know that the colours of the velvet ribbon which secured the tiara to the head were

Top, from left, summer is the highlight for the antiques trade, from Portobello Market, to Grays Markets in the West End, to antiques fairs which are part of the season, to auction houses which hold some of their most prestigious sales in June. Right, actress Liz Hurley at the annual celebrity-studded Grosvenor House Art and Antiques Fair.



changed from brown or cream to white or grey as its owner grew older?

It's nuggets of information like this that bring antiques to life and, even if you do not buy, the top fairs are a great place to look, lust and learn. The International Ceramics Fair, which covers glass as well as pottery and porcelain, runs a series of excellent lectures by top academics in the field. The earliest objects on display are Chinese tomb figures, dating from 2,000bc, while the Loan Exhibition, presented by the Crafts Council, is devoted to contemporary British ceramics. "There are some fantastic potters working in Britain at the moment," says exhibitor Adrian Sassoon, who is showing work dating from the 18th century to the present day. "They are selling to the public and private collections, and pieces of museum quality can be found for as little as £500."

While the International Ceramics Fair is now in its 17th year, *Hali* magazine is organising the first-ever major fair devoted to antique carpets and textiles to be held anywhere in the world. "London has always been the global capital for the oriental carpet and textile trade," explains *Hali* editor Daniel Shaffer. "The fair is not just for specialist collectors. We want to introduce the public to the beauty of these remarkable objects. In many ways oriental carpets and textiles are an under-appreciated medium, partly because they are anonymous, not signed by their creator in the manner of western



Above, Piccadilly Circus 1959 by LS Lowry will be auctioned by Phillips on June 9, 1998.



Left, French telephone handbag from the 1930s, on sale at Alfies Antique Market.

artworks. As an art form they can easily rival great paintings or sculpture, but they cost only a fraction of the price."

That said, you won't find much for less than four figures at the *Hali* show and it is easy to wander round the big fairs and to leave with nothing more than the handbook (generally supplied free with the ticket price). But these prestige events are not all that London has to offer in June, or indeed at any other time of the year. There are shops and antiques markets with merchandise of every kind and within reach of every budget.

Covering all levels of purchase is Alfies Antique Market. Situated off Edgware Road, it is one of London's best kept secrets: a secret that is except to dealers, who flock there from across the world. London's biggest antiques market, Alfies has more than 200

AUCTION HOUSES:

June is a high spot in the auction calendar, with a raft of important sales scheduled. All the auction houses can supply details, or just stroll into their West End salerooms for viewings.

On June 11, **Phillips** are holding a private view of their summer highlights and are offering 50 complimentary invitations to the first 50 readers of *The Illustrated London News* to write in to them. Contact Mark Tilley, Phillips, 101 New Bond Street, London W1.

dealers specialising in everything from advertising and packaging, to art-deco furniture and *Star Wars* toys. You might find a vintage diamanté brooch for as little as £33.50 (it is one of the best places in town for costume jewellery) or spend a few hundred on a Susie Cooper teapot or a Charles Eames chair. There is so much to look at, it's quite easy to spend the whole day there and, fortunately, the market also has an excellent café, complete with roof terrace, which is lovely on a fine day. Other good shops near Alfies include the Gallery of Antique Costume and Textiles, The Collector (Royal Doulton, Beswick, and modern ceramic collectables) and Beverley, one of the best dealers in London for 20s and 30s pottery and porcelain.

Like London buses, antique shops tend to come in clusters. Kensington Church Street is home to a number of specialist dealers ranging from Jonathan Horne (early English pottery) to Jeanette Hayhurst (glass). These are the kind of galleries where you might have to ring the door bell to gain admittance, but don't be shy and do go in. In my experience the dealers are welcoming, and though prices are unlikely to be cheap, quality is usually high.

If you know what you are looking for bargains can be found at Portobello Market.

Look out for Clarice Cliff ware, such as this Gayday Stanford teapot c 1932, at Grays Antique Markets.



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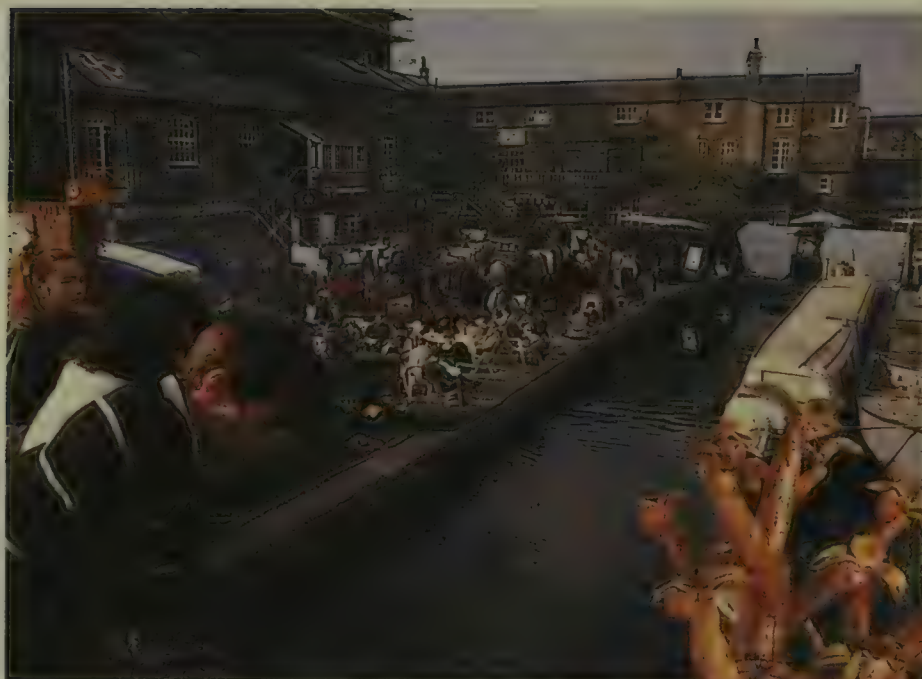
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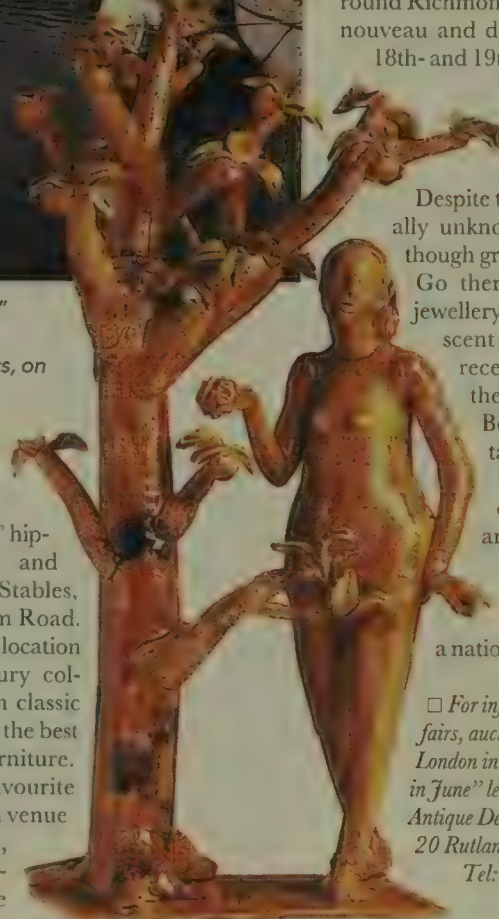


Above, Camden Lock is the place for ethnic crafts and "nouveau" hippie clothing, but there is also a good street market nearby. Right, "Eve" by Philip Eglin, 1993, a statuette in clay and ceramics, on sale at the International Ceramics Fair in June.

just 10 minutes up the road. There are an estimated 2,000 dealers here, trading in every possible subject. My favourite part of the market is under the Westway. This is a fantastic venue for vintage clothes (cheaper and more interesting than buying modern outfits from the high street) and with its casual, flea-market atmosphere, a good place for bargains. My best-ever find was two Palissy-style plates, dating from 1910 and decorated with three-dimensional spider crabs. They cost me £20 the pair, but I have since seen a single plate selling for around £400.

On Sundays, Camden is another good street market. Go early in the morning to avoid being trampled to death by hordes of students and tourists; bypass Camden Lock

(unless you are keen on ethnic crafts and "nouveau" hippie clothing) and head for the Stables, off Chalk Farm Road. This is a prime location for 20th-century collectables, from classic 30s toasters, to the best designer furniture. Another favourite North London venue is Islington, home to Camden Passage



and some of London's favourite antiques arcades.

Every area of London has its antique shops, and visits can be combined with trips to favourite tourist sites. At Greenwich there is an open-air antiques market on Saturdays and Sundays, while Flying Duck Enterprises in Creek Road is a paradise for lovers of 50s and 60s kitsch, with lava lamps and literally flocks of flying china ducks. Prices will also make you cheerful, beginning at under £5.

Some distance upstream on the Thames at Richmond a tour of Ham House could be followed by a visit to the antique shops centred round Richmond Hill: try Succession for art nouveau and deco, and the Chair Set for 18th- and 19th-century chairs.

Even central London has its surprises. Adjacent to Bond Street, in Davies Street, are Grays Antique Markets.

Despite their location, they are virtually unknown to the general public, though great favourites with the trade.

Go there for small antiques, fine jewellery, 19th-century majolica and scent bottles. For an interesting receptacle in which to carry them home, visit dealer Linda Bee for some of the best vintage handbags in town.

Whether you are into costly works of art or cheap and cheerful collectables, London in June will not disappoint. For, as Napoleon so nearly said, "England is a nation of antique shopkeepers".

□ For information about all the major fairs, auctions and events taking place in London in June and to obtain the "London in June" leaflet, contact The British Antique Dealers' Association (BADA), 20 Rutland Gate, London SW7. Tel: 0171-581 0373.

ANTIQUES FAIRS:

June 4-14 The Olympia Fine Art & Antiques Fair.

June 4-7 The Antiquarian Book Fair.

June 11-15 Hali International Antique Carpet & Textile Art Fair.

Olympia Exhibition Centre, Warwick Road, SW5. Tel: 0171-370 8186/8212.

June 11-20 The Grosvenor House Art & Antiques Fair. *Grosvenor House, Park Lane, W1. Tel: 0171-495 6406.*

June 12-15 The International Ceramics Fair. *Park Lane Hotel, Piccadilly, W1. Tel: 0171-734 5491.*

ANTIQUES MARKETS AND CENTRES:

Alfies Antique Market, 13-25

Church Street, NW8. Tel: 0171-723 6066.

Grays Antique Markets:

Grays North, 58 Davies St, W1 & Grays South, 1-7 Davies Mews, W1. Tel: 0171-629 7034.

Camden Passage, off Upper Street, N1. Tel: 0171-359 9969.

Antiquarians, 131-141 King's Road, SW3. Tel: 0171-351 5353.

GOOD ANTIQUES SHOPPING STREETS AND INDIVIDUAL DEALERS:

Kensington Church Street, W8: Jeanette Hayhurst, no 32a. Tel: 071-938 1539.

Jonathan Horne, no 66c. Tel: 0171-221 5658.

Church Street, NW8: Gallery of Antique Costume and Textiles, no 2. Tel: 0171-723 9981.

Beverley, no 30. Tel: 0171-262 1576.

The Collector, no 9. Tel: 0171-706 4586.

Greenwich SE10:

Flying Duck Enterprises, 320-322 Creek Road, SE10. Tel: 0181-858 1964.

Richmond Hill, Surrey:

Succession, 18 Richmond Hill, Richmond. Tel: 0181-940 6774.

The Chair Set, 84 Hill Rise, Richmond. Tel: 0181-332 6454.

Other streets and areas with good clusters of antiques shops include Pimlico Road, SW1, King's Road and New King's Road SW6, Lillie Road, SW6.

STREET MARKETS:

Camden Market, Camden High Street and Chalk Farm Road, NW1. Sat and Sun 9am-6pm.

Greenwich Market, Greenwich High Road, SE10. Sat and Sun 9am-5pm.

Portobello Market, Portobello Road, W10-W11. Sat 8am-6pm.

The Westway end of the market is also open on Fridays for clothes and bric-a-brac.

Reader Invitation to The Olympia Fine Art & Antiques Fair

Readers of ILN are offered two tickets for the price of one (normally £5 each). Either show a copy of this magazine at the door, or book in advance on the Hotline (0171-244 2219) quoting The Illustrated London News offer. Offer valid June 5-14 (not the opening day on June 4). Opening hours 11am-8pm; weekends until 7pm; June 14 until 5pm).

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LONDON

keeps its COOL

No Londoner can fail to be aware that they are living in the world's most "happening" city. Henry Porter looks at how the capital earned this accolade—and the reasons why the fun is only just beginning.

Stranded in Paris the other day, because the firefighters at Charles de Gaulle airport were on strike, I was suddenly reminded of what London was like during the mid-70s. Nothing has changed for the worse in the fabric of the French capital—its buildings, art galleries and restaurants are still among the finest in Europe—but there's an atmosphere of sullenness about the city. Once the cafés were full of people who seemed impossibly chic and at ease with themselves, now they look preoccupied and depressed.

The Parisians are probably unaware of the mood that has settled on their city but, coming from London of the 90s, it's difficult not to notice it and also, I admit, not to feel a shudder of *schadenfreude*. For my entire adult life London has felt vaguely inferior to Paris, but today there couldn't be a greater contrast between the cities and for once it's in our favour. London gives out messages of self-confidence, buoyancy, prosperity, above all a sense of experiment. On the surface the mood-swing appears to be rather mysterious, especially as Londoners didn't notice the improvements themselves and were the last to proclaim them. But there are, nevertheless, very good underlying reasons for the "Cool Britannia" phenomenon, which is why this is not just about a mood of elation that will vanish as quickly as it appeared.

The most interesting part of London's boom is that it was not engineered by government action, or by any inspirational civic authority. There is nothing like the apparatus of metropolitan bureaucrats you find in France and we have only a fraction of the funding that is available to the French for the arts and great public-building programmes. And yet we manage to export our theatre to the French (Tom Stoppard and David Hare are both playing in Paris); our fashion (Alexander McQueen, John Galliano, Stella McCartney); and our cinema (*Four Weddings and A Funeral*, *Nil By Mouth*, *Brassed Off*, *Shallow*

Grave and *The Full Monty* all got respectable audiences in Paris).

All of this happened without the help of London's staid system of administration. Still a little credit is due to the capital's local authorities. Planning laws have been relaxed which has encouraged novel use of old buildings and—much more significantly—the licensing laws have been eased. In the late-60s when Americans were lured to "Swinging London" by the celebrated *Time* magazine cover, they found that the city shut up shop at 10.30pm and went to bed with a mug of Horlicks. Today, the same American tourists would not be disappointed. At 1am the streets of Covent Garden, Soho, Islington and certain parts of Camden, Notting Hill, Kensington and Bayswater, are still full of young, good-looking, fashionably-dressed people having a ball. The variety of night life and the sense of vigour is only equalled by New York, which is why so many young Parisians take the Eurostar to Victoria in order to spend the weekend clubbing in London.

With the more tolerant, not to say grown-up, attitudes about when and where people could drink, came an immeasurable upgrading of the food and service in London's restaurants and hotels. Think back, if you will, to the dire experience of dining out in London 20 years ago. The menu was invariably unadventurous, the food came to the table tepid and often perspiring in grease, and the waiter had less charm than you'd find at a Romanian roadhouse. When you escaped from the restaurant, you encountered mountains of garbage left by the refuse workers who, like everyone else in the late-70s, were on strike.

If there is one man who can take credit for the civilising of British cuisine and the revolution in service that has taken place in the last decade, it is Sir Terence Conran. In fact I'd go further and say that Sir Terence is more responsible for "Swinging London" than any other individual. It's not just that his restaurants—Le Pont de la Tour, Quaglino's,

Mezzo, and Bluebird—are the gold standard of food and service; he also provided London with the sort of arenas of display and conspicuous expenditure that a fashionable city cannot be without. His influence, in terms of culinary skill, interior decoration and presentation, has filtered down the scale to the humblest of wine bars. While the service may not be perfect in London—it never will be—it is one of Conran's achievements that he made it possible for waiters and waitresses to feel good about doing their jobs well.

So when we come to think of erecting statues to celebrate this period of optimism and relative prosperity in London, 'T' Conran should be near the top of the list. Apart from anything else he activated the long-dormant—maybe even non-existent—visual sense in the British, making us care about everything from the appearance of a shopfront to the efficiency and design of a pepper grinder. The British architects, decorators and fashion designers currently enjoying success on the Continent all owe something to the culture of design that Conran began in the 60s and has elaborated in the last 10 years. He is still at his peak and if you want to see some of the most beautiful modern rooms anywhere in Europe, take a look at Conran's newly-opened Bluebird Gastrodome, just off the The Kings' Road.

In the past we always imagined that what was wrong with us was our failure to be more "European". This turns out to have been our strength. As the countries of Continental Europe join in an homogenising drift towards union, the British have remained contentedly ploughing their own furrow in practically every field. The designer Vivienne Westwood, the artist Damien Hirst and the film *Brassed Off* are all revered abroad because they are so original, so bizarre, so very different from anything that could be produced in Paris, Berlin and Milan.

It's difficult to know where this surge of non-conformist self-confidence came from,

although, of course, the cultural boom could not have happened without a healthy economy. Britain emerged from the recession much sooner than Germany, France and Italy and since the early-90s it has had sound records of employment and growth. One doesn't want to be triumphalist about our success, but the fact is that we have a much more nimble economy than the French who are, to use their own term, *dirigiste* and burdened by vast social welfare bills. Our economic agility is the legacy of Thatcherism and, to a lesser degree, John Major who refused to spend his way out of the recession. It is an irony indeed that Cool Britannia was born in the dying months of his premiership, which was regarded by the electorate as the least inspirational of this century.

National self-confidence is not, however, just driven by a good economy. If this were the only factor, Germany would lead Europe in design, cinema, fashion and music—but try to name a single German film director, rock group or international fashion designer and you find yourself struggling. No, this sudden self-confidence has a lot to do with the English—not the British—losing their bossy, elder-brother attitude towards the rest of the union. The Scots and Welsh are beginning to go their own way, which means that the English find themselves relieved of the prefect's responsibilities. We are at last free to be ourselves—ingenious, eccentric, inventive, daring, erratic and, yes, stylish. I can hardly believe I have just written that string of adjectives, but they are nevertheless the qualities which have coalesced to make London the “capital of cool”, and which, despite the hype of the time, conspicuously failed to do so in the late-60s. That is why this particular boom has a lot more stamina than the last one.

Cinema is always a good indicator of a nation's self esteem. For years successive governments promised to do something about the British film industry but none of them actually pulled it off. This was not because the politicians lacked sincerity or the British lacked talent, but rather we could not imagine making films about and for ourselves. We were paralysed by the poise of French directors, the sensuality of Italians and the lofty angst of the Germans. Now all three Continental schools have faded, partly because the deregulation of European television has attracted all the funding, but mostly because they ran out of creative steam.

British cinema, on the other hand, has suddenly blossomed and we are making films for and about the British—whether it is the Scots in *Trainspotting* and *Shallow Grave* or the English in *The Full Monty* and *Secrets and Lies*. It is perhaps surprising that these essentially parochial films are registering international success, but then what is American cinema if not the reworking and confirmation of local culture? In other words, parochialism writ large, and the movies succeed because they are not trying to be anything other than American. In the success of Gary Oldman's *Nil By Mouth*, an uncompromising study of despair and abuse in a London council estate, the lesson is there for every film-maker to see. The film made no attempt to appeal to the



“At 1am, the streets are still full of young, fashionably-dressed people having a ball”

international audience at the Cannes film Festival—and that is exactly why they liked it.

Many of the virtues that go to make up “Swinging London” are not new, but have simply been rediscovered. The West End is one of these. Despite cuts in arts funding it continues to provide the best theatre in Europe and is now attracting young, talented writers such as Patrick Marber at the National (*Closer*), Martin McDonagh at the Royal Court (*The Beauty Queen of Leenane*) and Ben Elton at The Apollo (*Popcorn*).

To gauge the health of the theatre you only have to look at the record of the Almeida in Islington which led its spring programme with Juliette Binoche in *Naked*, Liam Neeson in *The Judas Kiss* and Ian McDiarmid in *The Doctor's Dilemma*. The Almeida accommodates a mere 300 people at each performance, so it is clear that these actors are not drawn by the money or the volume of applause. They perform there because of what they can learn from working with the Almeida's directors and also from playing in front of one of the most sophisticated theatre audiences in the world.

Much of the joy of London's current success is this sense of rediscovery. I find myself looking at the city afresh and seeing a place that is increasingly clean and attractive, and which works astonishingly well, given that it houses a population twice the size of that of New Zealand. The important point is that despite the huge developments of the 80s, its essential character has not changed. It is still a sprawling metropolis which somehow manages to embrace hundreds of different villages and communities, each with a distinct atmosphere of its own.

Walk across the city, as I did the other day, starting out at Christ Church, Nicholas Hawksmoor's masterpiece in the East End. You start off through the newly restored Spitalfields Market and make for the vast, new developments around Liverpool Street

Station. Shutting your eyes as you pass the Barbican—a product of the first “Swinging London”—you head for Smithfield Market which is in the final stages of a remarkable redevelopment. Then you move on to Covent Garden, through Soho and into Mayfair. Along the way you will find new buildings and signs of regeneration that you didn't believe existed. There are restaurants, bars and shops, all crowded with attractive young people.

Is this the elixir of optimism at work, or is there another reason for the amazing number of good-looking people in London? Of course we eat and dress better than we did 30 years ago, and we are a degree or two more conscious about health and fitness. These things help, but there is another major reason and that is the huge and, to my mind, beneficial influx of foreigners. Where I live, in deepest Bayswater, you can hear up to a dozen different languages being spoken in a hundred-yard stretch of Queensway. I am served coffee in the morning by a woman whose first language is Czech, my newsagent is an Egyptian, my hairdresser is Australian, my greengrocer is a Cypriot and the local traffic warden, whom I have befriended for not entirely altruistic reasons, is Basque.

London is on the verge of becoming as cosmopolitan as New York and, like New Yorkers, we all get on well together. There are race problems, particularly in the East End, but in general London has absorbed this huge number of immigrants without overwhelming difficulty. If you compare London to Paris or Berlin, where there are now housing estates that are reserved exclusively for Germans, you realise that we have pulled off something remarkable. We shouldn't be complacent about race relations, but there's no reason to be depressed about them either. Indeed London draws great strength from the people who have come here over the last three decades and without them we would not be swinging quite as vigorously.

How long London continues to be at the cutting edge of fashion will depend on the economy—although the recent changes made in London's restaurant culture and in the fabric of the city will mean that it will be a great place to live in for at least the next decade or two.

It will also depend on the way Londoners wish to be administered. By the time you read this article, London will have voted on the principle of creating an elected Mayor. I expect the vote will go in favour of the proposal, although I cannot see the point of electing an individual whose simple aim will be to represent London. The city consists of so many diverse communities and neighbourhoods that, in a sense, it is un-representable. The other point is that we seem to have got on perfectly well without a mayor and the expensive tiers of bureaucracy that a mayor would necessarily introduce.

When the various mayoral candidates eventually present themselves to Londoners, they will have to show us that we stand to gain more than they do—never an easy task for a politician. They will also be well-advised to remember that “Swinging London” is not the child of bureaucracy □

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Fun and Games in County Hall

County Hall's vast expanse, empty since the abolition of the Greater London Council, is being brought back to life. Giles Worsley charts its regeneration.

Ever since those final memorable fireworks that marked the abolition of the Greater London Council in April 1986, County Hall has sat redundant and empty beside the Thames, gazing across the river at its former rival and, ultimately, nemesis, the Houses of Parliament. The powerhouse of the greatest local authority in the world had been reduced to a sad shell. For over a decade, Londoners have wondered was going on inside that gaunt façade. And, more pertinently, what was going to happen. Now, at last, County Hall is being reborn, but in a guise that is original architect, Ralph Knott, would find hard to recognise.

County Hall was a symbol of that moment in British politics when powerful local authorities were seen as the solution to the practical

problems of city living. As municipal responsibilities grew—schools, sewers, housing, planning, transport—so did the need for offices to house bureaucrats. London was slow off the mark. Only in 1888 was the London County Council created and with it the demand for a town hall—or rather a County Hall, for this was no mere borough—that would reflect the importance of the greatest city on earth.

The site chosen was a provocative one, on the south bank of the River Thames, on the opposite side of Westminster Bridge to the House of Commons. The seed had been sown for a long series of confrontations between the two elective assemblies which would end with the defeat and abolition of the interloper just two years before its centenary. Erecting such a building was a slow process. The land had to be assembled, a competition held to choose the architect,

a design agreed and only then could building work begin.

Although a new headquarters was high on the LCC's list of priorities it was not until 1907 that a competition was held, won by the 29-year-old Ralph Knott, then an assistant in Aston Webb's office. Work began in 1909 but progress was slow. The building was occupied in 1922 and finally completed in 1933.

Solid and opulent, rather than beautiful, is the best way to describe the result, and this is as true of the interior as the exterior. Most of the building was given over to endless corridors of offices, but the public rooms and the offices of senior staff were designed to impress. Stone, marble and handsomely detailed oak-panelled alcoves. This was a building meant to last. The trouble was that the institution it housed did not. When the LCC's successor, the Greater London Council, lost the battle with Parliament and was abolished, the future of County Hall presented an embarrassing question to Government. Court cases and a public inquiry reduced

progress to a snail's pace. Schemes came and went, the most attractive of which was to move the London School of Economics' deck stock and barrel into the building. In the end, however, only one bidder was left, the family-owned Japanese property company Shiryama Shokusan. In 1993 Shiryama bought the original County Hall building for £60 million, the payment of £10 million of which was delayed until 2012. The postwar extensions on York Road were bought by Galliard Homes who have converted them with great success into 424 apartments, all of which have been sold, many of them to overseas purchasers who see them as an investment. This has been so successful that Galliard is just starting work building two new infill ranges along Belvedere Road, which will house a further 170 apartments, ranging in price from £175,000 to £550,000.

The real challenge, however, was how to fill the vast 1.5 million square feet that Shiryama had acquired, much of it with important listed interiors, including the former Council Chamber. First thoughts were to turn the

building into a hotel and conference centre, but the economic recession and changing hotel market made this unviable. Instead a new concept was launched. County Hall was to be a family entertainment emporium.

Slowly the pieces of this vision are beginning to come together. Like a vast, deserted Ancient Roman building discovered and occupied by barbarian invaders—the Colosseum perhaps or Diocletian's Palace at Split in Croatia—County Hall is being colonised, piece by piece, by new inhabitants. A restaurant here, a visitor attraction there, and now two large hotels. The once

When County Hall is fully occupied, one-time London supreme Ken Livingstone, right, will be hard put to recognise the echoing corridors of his former domain, which is destined to become a family leisure emporium complete with restaurants for every kind of diner, budget and up-market hotels, an aquarium, electronic fun and tenguin bowling at Namco Station, and a health and beauty facility.



monolithic County Hall is gradually taking on a very different image.

Among the first arrivals last year was the London Aquarium, cleverly built into the vaults under the former Members' Terrace at the centre of the riverfront. Here, amid mystic, ethereal music, sinister sharks circle submerged Easter Island heads, and brilliantly coloured Yellow and Regal Tangs dart in and out from behind the rocks. There are flapping Stingrays which children can stroke, while Purplemouth Morays, comfortably ensconced in the barrel of a sunken pirate ship's cannon, appear to laugh at the passing tourists.

If the London Aquarium is a haven of hushed quiet, next door's Namco Station—"Europe's latest interactive entertainment experience has arrived"—is quite the reverse. Set in the vast, circular former Record Room below the Members' Courtyard this is a riotous mix of sophisticated computer games—blast invading aliens or race your friends round a virtual Silverstone—and traditional fairground entertainment, pin-ball machines, lucky dips and creaky camel races, all set round a bumper-car ring. There is tenpin bowling, a sequence of pool tables and even a bar, which has more the feel of a nightclub than an amusement arcade. Any former librarian who wanders in will be hard put to recognise the once hallowed and dusty archive.

Restaurants—for every sort of diner—are also beginning to proliferate around the building. Already there is a Macdonalds serving the London Aquarium and Namco and, if you climb the steps up to the Members' Terrace, you will find a smart Chinese restaurant, the Four Regions, in the left-hand sweep of the crescent. An Italian restaurant is planned to open soon and in the north-east corner, on Belvedere Road, a 185-seat Porter's Restaurant opened in February. This is part of a complex which presents the best value accommodation in London, a Travel Inn budget hotel where rooms cost £49.50—and some of the rooms sleep four! No wonder they are already experiencing 95-100 per cent occupancy.

If Travel Inn, Macdonalds and Namco suggest a somewhat mass-market future for this august edifice, do not fear. County Hall is such a large building that it can accommodate a wide range of users, from the most popular through to the most exclusive. In the soon-to-be-opened Marriott Hotel and The Club at County Hall show. It is this diversity which should make County Hall a vibrant place to go, no longer a single, monolithic institution, more an enormously varied city block.

Marriott, like Travel Inn, is owned by Whitbread which has taken a lease on 40 per cent of the building. The deal is a clever one. Marriott gets the large rooms with their premium views along the river, while the Travel Inn gets the perfectly serviceable, but apertless, rooms in the interior courtyards. Tucked away as it is in the back of the building, the Travel Inn makes surprisingly little impact on County Hall. It is a mark of the scale of the building that a 312-bed hotel can be so easily absorbed. When the Marriott opens in May this will all change. For the first time the lights will again go on along the river front. County Hall will again begin to live.

After the simple entrance to the Travel Inn, the approach to the Marriott could hardly be more impressive. This was the route London's elected representatives used to take, under the



The Millennium Wheel, as depicted left, will tower over its offices in adjacent County Hall, while the exclusive health club The Club, above, boasts a vast, fifth-floor swimming pool.

great arch off Westminster Bridge Road, through the massive Hansa House vaulted corridor and into the Members' Courtyard. No guest could fail to realise that this is a very special hotel as they pass through the great bronze doors of the Members' Entrance. For a major five-star hotel the Marriott will be relatively small, only 200 beds, and its target market is very clear, businessmen and independent travellers. Although it has the grandeur to match, the Marriott is not trying to compete with London's most luxurious hotels such as the Dorchester and the Lanesborough. Its competitors are more the Hilton on Park Lane, and the Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park Hotel. Its advantage—apart from the building—is its stunning location and its convenience for the Eurostar terminal at Waterloo.

The former offices have converted remarkably well to a hotel. (The biggest problem was services. The corridors are so long that an electric train with refrigerated trucks has been installed to prevent chilled food deteriorating between the lorry yard and the kitchen.) The grand oak-panelled first floor has been turned into reception and meeting rooms, with the former senior officers' rooms along the central Crescent knocked into one to house a smart restaurant—which will have one of London's leading chefs to give it the requisite glamour. When converting these rooms, Marriott was not allowed to breathe without the permission of English Heritage. With impressive flexibility, however, English Heritage has allowed the necessary alterations to be made—providing they were sympathetic. Says Sir Jocelyn Stevens: "County Hall is a Thameside landmark with an architectural vigour on a par with that of its big brother across the river. Since the abolition of the GLC in 1986, English Heritage has been anxious about its fate and we are delighted that at last the building has come back to life. We've been able to work closely with the developers to ensure that all the best rooms and spaces are carefully preserved so that Londoners will be able to enjoy the building for many years to come."

Thus all the partition walls in the dining room were removed to create a single room, but the panelling has been retained giving the impression that it was always one room. Similarly, where doorways have been knocked through in meeting rooms, the doors have been designed to match the heavy oak-panelled originals. Only a

particularly observant expert, or someone who knew the room before, would realise it has changed. Two former occupants who will notice the difference are Ken Livingstone and Tony Banks, leader and chairman respectively of the GLC at the time of its abolition. Their former offices are now part of the restaurant.

Upstairs—where the rooms were never of importance—English Heritage allowed the interiors to be stripped back to their steel frames. This meant rooms could be refurnished to make impressively large bedrooms—the spacing of the windows determined their size. Each of the Marriott rooms has been individually designed so that no two are alike. By contrast, at the Travel Inn all the bedrooms were prefabricated off-site, brought to County Hall on lorries, hoisted up to the appropriate floor and then rolled along to their final destination, where they were plumbed in and connected up to the electricity.

Even so, the hotel was left with the problem of what to do with the two floors above the Crescent where there are only little partitions and windows. The decision was taken to use the space to create a new members-only health club that would rival the Harbour Club in Chelsea. Adjacent to it, is the 25-metre pool perched, apparently perilously although the structural engineers insist it is safe, on the fifth floor.

Even with the arrival of Marriott and the Travel Inn, more than half County Hall is still to be let. Next year the Millennium Wheel will take up space at the corner of Jubilee Gardens; there is a children's library planned in the former Education Library; Diana, Princess of Wales' Memorial Fund has also recently moved in. But Mr Okamoto's light-tipped about plans for the rest of the building.

One tenant which is unlikely to materialise is the proposed new Greater London Authority. The former Council Chamber is sitting there waiting to be reused. Half the first floor with its grand offices is still empty. It is unlikely, however, that Tony Blair, mindful of the battles that once raged between the LCC/GLC and the Government of the day, will want the new GLA to occupy such a potent symbol of a building. Today, County Hall is firmly a family leisure emporium, not a political phoenix.

□ The author is architecture correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*.

Dream Dates

Mary Smith picks her perfect partners and the hottest spots for a fantastic, fantasy Season.



COWES AHoy!

As thousands of sailing boats converge on Cowes for intensive racing, you will find me on King Harald of Norway's smart yacht. This dashing royal is just one of the many crowned heads, princes and aristocrats who make this an occasion well worth the journey to the Isle of Wight. In the evenings, I will be staying at The Prospect (a wonderful house belonging to The Hon Laura Attkin) or one of its neighbours on the waterfront.

The Regatta has been run by the Cowes Combined Clubs since 1964, but the event itself dates back to 1820, when King George IV first attended. The Royal Corinthian Yacht club, the Royal London Yacht Club and the Island Sailing Club work together, with races starting every morning at the Royal Yacht Squadron line near Cowes Castle.

You'll find me looking nautical but nice! I shall be casual by day and Euro-chic at night. To pretend that I am an expert seaman I shall need my Helly Hansen waterproofs, Escada Sports shorts and well-worn-in deck shoes. I'll hang a pair of binoculars around my neck and tuck a copy of *Yachting World's*

special Cowes supplement under my arm. This will enable me to make informed comments as the gun signals the first race at 10.30am and keep me going until lunchtime.

In the afternoon I will have a siesta, before starting the whirl of drinks parties. If not dining on King Harald's yacht, I will take its rigid-hull inflatable boat to get from deck party to deck party. You will spot me in all the best restaurants, such as The Balm That in Cowes or The George Hotel in Yarmouth.

I have cultivated friends who are members of every yacht and sailing club, so I will have guest badges for each club and invitations to every ball. The Squadron Ball on the Monday is a "must" and is usually attended by the royal family. You will definitely see me on the lawn of the Royal Yacht Squadron for the fireworks display on the last Friday.

□ *Skandia Life Cowes Week, August 1-8. Cowes, Isle of Wight (01983 293744).*

The dashing King Harald of Norway is one of the many crowned heads and princes who make Cowes well worth the journey.



FIELD OF FASHION

Ascot offers four days of the finest racing anywhere in the world. This is the pinnacle of the summer season so why not let the imagination run riot? As I picture myself at Windsor, I am building castles in the air—I see myself as the guest of Prince Charles on Ladies' Day, the most prestigious day of the week.

The racecourse belongs to the Queen and for Ascot Week the court moves to Windsor, where Her Majesty entertains a few selected guests. The form is to arrive in time for lunch and to leave at the end of the day's racing or after dinner.

Ladies' Day, or Gold Cup Day on the Thursday, demands a fabulous outfit, preferably by a British designer such as Amanda Wakeley, Catherine Walker or Bellville Sassoon. Accessories are all, and I will go straight to Philip Treacy for a hat, to Anya Hindmarsh for a beautiful bag and to Jimmy Choo for my shoes. It will take me at least two months to organise my outfit, bearing in mind that head and shoulders must be covered—although the length of one's skirt seems to rely on the discretion of the authorities of the day.

The highlight of the occasion, at about 2pm, is the royal procession up the racecourse, established in 1825 by King George IV. Distinguished guests are each presented with a list neatly printed on Windsor Castle writing paper denoting their place in the carriages. Millions of television viewers join the crowds in craning for a view of the occupants of the four distinctive Ascot landaus. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh sit in the first one and Prince Charles may well sit in the second.

On arrival at the racecourse I will walk behind the Queen to the royal box, where I will have every imaginable comfort—a fabulous view of the top-class racing, a television for replays of highlights and a superb tea. Why leave the box except to join the Queen viewing the horses as they are paraded in the paddock? At about five o'clock the cars will gather outside the royal box to return us to Windsor in style, escaping the crowds all queuing up to leave.

□ *Ascot week: June 16-19. Ladies' Day is on the Thursday, Ascot Racecourse, Ascot, Berkshire (01344 622211).*

ALL FOR TENNIS

Wimbledon is one of the newest events of the Season—it began in 1877—and a sure sign that summer is here (even if it does rain for the entire fortnight). It holds a special place in the international tennis calendar thanks to the manicured grass courts. The venue, at the All England Lawn Tennis Club, is spread out and a happy, relaxed atmosphere prevails whatever the match's tensions.

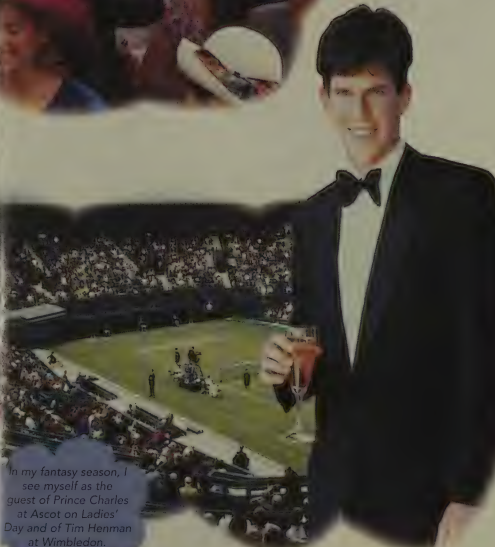
The most glamorous place to be is the player's box on Centre Court. In my fantasy season I am the guest of Tim Henman—Britain's brightest home-grown tennis hero in years. I have been totally won over by his charm and toothpaste-commercial good looks.

On the day, a hospitality car will whisk us through the traffic and drop us off at the front of the Wimbledon main building. Tim will immediately be mobbed by fans, while I emanate cool from behind my Ray-Bans.

Once in the privacy of the player's box I will settle back to watch the tennis, remembering to look gorgeous at all times as one never knows when the cameras might close in. I shall keep a watchful eye on the royal box at Wimbledon attracts the most glamorous royals—most of the Kents, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester and their various friends. I will cheer Tim on until he wins his match, and then disappear to gorge myself on cakes, sandwiches and strawberries.

□ *Wimbledon fortnight, June 22-July 5. All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, Church Road, Wimbledon SW19 (0181-946 2244).*

In my fantasy season, I see myself as the guest of Prince Charles at Ascot on Ladies' Day and of Tim Henman at Wimbledon.



SONG FEST IN SURREY

The popularity of opera is growing apace—especially when performed on summer evenings in the English countryside. But nothing can match the magic of Glyndebourne, where the original opera house, built by John Christie in 1934, has been replaced by a fabulous, state-of-the-art venue, without any of the atmosphere being lost.

I shall be attending Glyndebourne with the newly-elected chairman of the Arts Council, Gerry Robinson, as everyone wants to meet him. We will take a helicopter from Battersea

heliport and I will lead-line the hem of my dress to stop it blowing up when I disembark. My cashmere pashmini throw will be essential both for the journey and to keep me warm in the interval.

Glyndebourne's top-class productions are performed in the original languages. The opera to see this season is *Capriccio* by Richard Strauss. In the first six performances Dame Kiri te Kanawa sings the leading role of the Countess and in the final six Dame Felicity Lott takes the

lead. I must confess to being a newcomer to the world of opera, and for my second visit of the season I will opt for some light relief—perhaps *Le Comte Ory* by Rossini, which I hear is charming and amusing.

In the interval we will spread out our wonderful Fortnum & Mason picnic on the main lawn, with the sun on our backs, and I will browse through my Gertrude Jekyll book to get the most from the spectacular gardens. After the performance our helicopter will be waiting to whisk us home. I shall be tucked up in bed by midnight having had a glorious evening.

□ Glyndebourne Festival Opera, May 21-August 28. Near Lewes, East Sussex (01273 813813).

I would choose to attend Glyndebourne with Arts Council chairman Gerry Robinson, left, as everyone wants to meet him.



PEAK POLO

The Cartier International at Windsor Great Park is summer's most glamorous polo event and the highlight of the season, which gets under way at the end of May. It is a dashing, fast-moving game of skill and exciting to watch, not least because the players are so good-looking and the horses (or ponies as they are properly called) so sleek and athletic.

My dream is to be invited by Cartier and to have their most famous guest on my arm. Last year I would have chosen the young actor Matt Damon, who was nominated for an Oscar in *Good Will Hunting*. This year I'd prefer Joseph Fiennes (younger brother of Ralph) who is becoming a huge star in his own right. Expect to see me in my cool new Vuarnet sunglasses, a Ralph Lauren blazer, white jeans, a pair of Gucci loafers and a cashmere jersey thrown casually over my shoulders.

We shall sit at the top table in the middle of the wonderful marquise, which is decorated

by leading interior designer Kelly Hoppen, with stunning flower arrangements by John at The Flower Van. We will feast on a delicious lunch provided by Anton Mosimann and drink far too much Cuvée Cartier champagne. After lunch we will settle into the best grandstand seats to watch the England v Chile International: this will be a fantastic match as Chile produces some of the world's best—and most dishy—players.

Afterwards we will move on to the royal box to watch the Prince Philip Trophy and have tea with the Queen (Cartier are allowed to send five guests into the royal box). We will be whisked back to London in a convertible—the Prince of Wales' Aston Martin, perhaps?

□ Cartier International Polo, July 26. Smith's Lawn, Windsor Great Park, Englefield Green, Surrey (01784 437897).





At Henley I'd like hunky oarsmen Matthew Pinsent and Steven Redgrave, above, one on each arm; and I'd have Joseph Fiennes, bottom left, to escort me to the Cartier polo.

RIVER ROWING

Everyone adores Henley for the picnic, the party and the punting on the river. Never underestimate the grip that this 1½ mile reach of the Thames has on the imagination of people all around the world. Henley Regatta was first held in 1839, and began with just one afternoon of races. Since Prince Albert became its royal patron it has been properly known as a royal event. World-class rowing teams fly in from all over the world to attend this timeless, quintessentially English spectacle.

Drinking Pimm's in the Leander Club is equal to being received in the royal box at Ascot. However, more of my friends will be in the Stewards' Enclosure so I will pop in there from time to time. I shall wear my best summery dress from Ghost because it covers my knees—miniskirts, trousers and divided skirts are forbidden—and team this with a pair of glamorous sandals (while keeping wellies as an essential backup). My first drink of the day will be iced coffee at about 11 am, followed by champagne. I will then make a big effort to look interested in the rowing—particularly the race for the oldest and biggest trophy, the Grand Challenge Cup for Eights—before beating a quick retreat to the Fawley Bar.

To accompany me to Henley, I'd like one hunky oarsman for each arm. Leander Club's Olympic gold medallists Steven Redgrave and Matthew Pinsent would perfectly fit the bill. They could row me down the river beyond the course for a picnic and moor on the Boom for the afternoon. That way I could see the races while sunbathing in my new Herve swimsuit.

□ Henley Royal Regatta, July 1-5. Henley-on-Thames, Oxon (01491 572153).

HENLEY REGATTA

Outside interests

Continental-style café-bars are transforming London and this British flirtation with alfresco living, as Roger Tredre discovers, is rapidly becoming a full-blown love affair.

A friend of mine who recently returned to London after a lengthy stint abroad said he no longer recognised his home town. London had been transformed during his years away. It was as if the city had switched from introvert to extrovert overnight. Suddenly Londoners were living life in the open air, reclaiming the streets.

So far so good. His delight was, however, also mixed with dismay. Where had all the familiar smoky Victorian pubs gone? In their place were foreign café-bars with big, glass windows, serving foreign lagers, *croques monsieur* and tapas. And what were Londoners doing with their lunchtime? These days they perched en masse on high stools eating disturbingly healthy trays of sushi in a chain of shops called Pret à Manger. A final episode caused him to froth at the mouth. He phoned to report that Englishmen were playing boules in his local south London park. *Oh la la!* He needed a lot of reassurance. No, Britain had not been invaded in his absence. Yes, we have imported some of the more agreeable cultural mores of our continental cousins. And yes, pubs will continue to serve warm beer into the next millennium.

He does, however, have a point. Drive across London and count the plethora of French cafés and restaurants—Café Flo, Café Rouge, Café This and Café That, serving frothing cups of cappuccino. Or visit the new chain of All Bar Ones, which seem to be replacing our local pubs, boasting an impressive wine list and attracting a clientele of office workers lunching on chargrilled salmon steaks. With their big, glass windows and bright, spacious interiors, All Bar Ones were designed to attract more women into pubs, but they have sparked off a new way of life.

This shift in lifestyle has been steadily evolving since the early 90s as part of a nationwide alfresco trend—an opening-up of our social life that is quickening by the month.

More and more bars open throughout the day, serving coffees as well as pints of bitter. And pubs are making distinct efforts to broaden their appeal, introducing dining areas for families and children and extending the food on offer beyond the pitiful traditional fare of overcooked meat and veg.

There is, nonetheless, more to it than that. My theory is that new cafés are only one symptom of a broader trend towards the outdoors. After years of hard labour, those of us who live primarily office-based lives are finally reacting to the confines of the workplace. We don't want to walk from a cramped office directly into a cramped pub. We want to be outdoors, even on a chilly day: some London restaurants are even introducing continental-style outdoor heaters so that their customers can sit outside after dark.

Our working lives are increasingly monitored by the impersonal hum of computer screens and the dry whir of air-conditioning systems. No wonder we want some fresh air once we've left the office. All the statistics demonstrate that outdoor pursuits, ranging from cycling to camping, are on the rise. The Ramblers Association, for example, has one of the fastest-growing memberships in the country. When summertime clocks in, Londoners are heading straight for the country at weekends to enjoy life *en plein air*. Sober City types are talking about downshifting, cashing in their share options and moving to Suffolk or Sussex or Oxfordshire.

At this time of year the best way of monitoring the shift in the nation's pattern of living is to visit an open-air festival. Every town worthy of the name wants in on the act: concerts, fashion shows, cabaret, you name it—they are all staged outdoors, part of an under-appreciated summer phenomenon.

The improvement in the climate has certainly helped. Remember when British summers were seasons for stout hearts? Twenty years ago, we always dreamed of long sunny

Photographer
Jean Paul Froget
Models
Phillipa and Jack
Stylist
Roberta Resto
Hair & Make-up
Cor Koulemaak





Throughout Britain, summertime is alfresco, festival time as audiences enjoy the informal atmosphere of events, such as, above, a concert by Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra at Wilton House, or, left, performance arts at the annual Henley Festival.



weekends and then suffered the reality of long drizzle-drenched Sundays huddled under umbrellas. In the early 70s, I received a thorough soaking on a school trip to *The Merry Wives of Windsor* in Holland Park—it nearly put me off Shakespeare for life. Last year, by contrast, I listened to Handel in T-shirt and shorts on a hazy, high-summer evening at a Kenwood concert on Hampstead Heath.

We British are well suited to enjoying the outdoors because even when it rains, we're not deterred. The Dunkirk spirit comes out. When Michael Nyman played at the Greenwich Festival last year, they had to dry the mixing desk with hairdryers. But the audience stayed to the very end.

Festival organisers confirm the shift in mood. They report a real sense that Britain is catching up with continental Europe inspired by the open-air events that are part of the cultural fabric of so many continental towns and cities. The great street festivals of Auriac and Chalons, in France, and Tarraga, in Spain, are the new models for arts festivals across Britain. Christopher Barron, artistic director of the Brighton Festival, one of

Britain's biggest events, explains: "There's a new confidence in Britain about working with Europe, and transferring some of the cultural life here."

Of course, the British summer season has always had its outdoor highlights, usually focused around sporting events such as Royal Ascot, Wimbledon, and Henley, or the exclusive social ambience of Glyndebourne and the Alfred Dunhill Queen's Cup Polo. What has changed is that the alfresco revolution is embracing a much broader spectrum of people, and putting families at the centre of the action. The new generation of open-air events, attract audiences of all ages in their thousands, and many provide free admission. They stir up tremendous interest among local communities, and tend to bring in everyone from the champagne-swiggers to the six-pack beer-drinkers.

Britain's leading orchestras have noticed the trend. For the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, outdoor performances have become a significant source of revenue in the summer months. While audience numbers are dwindling in the concert halls, they are soaring in the great outdoors. The informal spirit of

open-air events matches the mood of the times. Fewer people are prepared to dress up smartly and stifle coughs in the often claustrophobic environs of an auditorium when they could be picnicking beneath the stars, with their children roaming freely, while listening to Vivaldi wafting across the grass. Christopher Barron says: "It's part of a movement in the arts world away from formal venues towards more informal, fluid, experimental spaces."

Bradley Hemmings, artistic director of the Greenwich and Docklands International Festival, makes another good point: "Audiences are looking for an occasion, an event, not simply a concert. These days, you can listen to the perfect recording on state-of-the-art, hi-fi equipment in your own livingroom, so people expect something special when they go out. We have to provide a whole experience." The Greenwich and Docklands Festival is in its third year of open-air concerts. "Last year we had 8,000 people at a performance of contemporary and flamenco Spanish dance in the grounds of the Royal Naval College," recalls Hemmings.

For classical music purists, it's far from ideal. Open-air concerts



GILSON MENDIL/NETWORK



Thameside dining at Gabriel's Wharf, top, and above, Kent's Wye Downs attract increasing numbers of city walkers.

tend to play it safe, presenting the great classics performed with vigour rather than subtlety. An orchestral performance in the open air does not generally merit recording for posterity, but the pros outweigh the cons. The upside of the open-air festival is that a new generation is coming to music, theatre and performance under the most enticing of circumstances. Since 1996, more than 30,000 people have enjoyed the Last Night of the Proms in an event in Hyde Park called Proms in the Park.

A series of festivals in London is placing open-air events at the heart of their programming. They range from the Islington International Festival and Stoke Newington Midsummer Festival in June, with outdoor installations and "live" art, to the Dulwich Festival in September, with art for sale on a popular Party in Dulwich Park day. Outside London, the Henley Festival of Music and the Arts, now in its 16th year, has added a Family Fiesta! day this season. Stewart Collins, artistic director, says the day will be a big hit with locals: "The festival movement has been extremely light on its feet in responding to this democratisation

of the arts—broadening the audience beyond the normal concert patrons."

As I patiently explained to my friend back from Australia, we British are changing. Having acquired a taste for alfresco living, it's *au revoir* to the stiff upper lip, to cocktails and croquet on the lawn and *bonjour* to kisses on both cheeks and a glass of pastis before a game of boules. And with that I placed my arms around him and gave him a huge Gallic hug. He looked shocked. I think he will be heading back to Australia before long.

☐ Open-air highlights of the summer festival season include: *Jools Holland*, 17 July; and *Lesley Garrett*, 18 July, at *Greenwich and Docklands International Festival* (tel: 0181-305 1818).

Willard White and the Philharmonia, 8 July; and *Peter and the Wolf*, *Family Fiesta! day*, 12 July, at *Henley Festival of Music and the Arts* (tel: 01491 843404). *Proms in the Park*, the *Last Night of the Proms*, 12 September (tel: 0900 143 109).

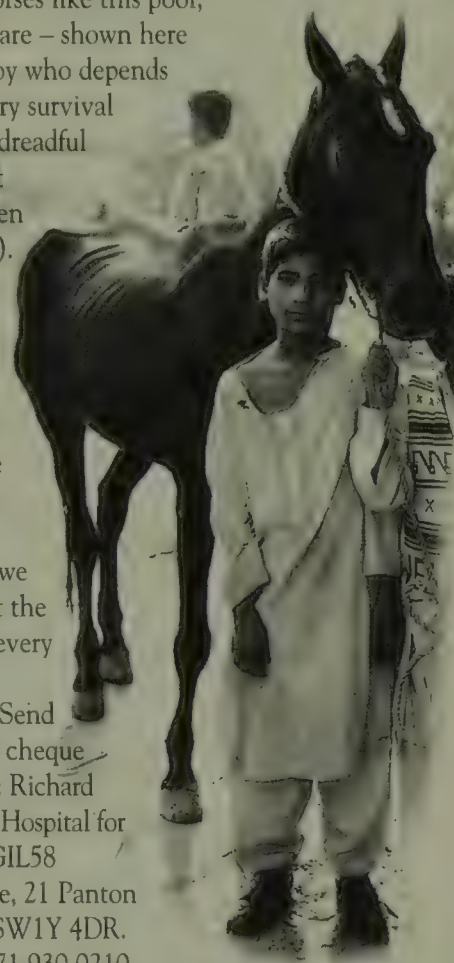
Other festivals of interest include: *Stoke Newington Midsummer Festival*, 14-20 June; *Islington International Festival*, 15-27 June; and *Dulwich Festival* (12-13 September). *Dates and timings are liable to change.*

How you can help the Brooke Hospital for Animals

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Postcode _____



GIL58

They depend on us – we depend on you

Called to the bar

Casualties have always shunned fun and extravagance, but suddenly there's a new sophistication in the air. The big, sticky, over-the-top drinks of the 1980s with their paper umbrellas, sparklers and plastic straws have made way for drinks that are sleeker and infinitely more grown up. The flamboyance is dead—all that juggling and spinning of bottles—long live the old-school Martini. The baby-boomers, refusing to grow old gracefully, are building a binge-drinking scene where they don't have to get in, get out, have to take out a second mortgage to buy a round of drinks and, most importantly, don't have to dance.



THE FINAL FRONTIER

Mash on Great Portland Street has the most democratic door policy of the bunch. Owner, Oliver Peyton, is a self-confessed man of the people, meaning Top Shop assistants can be spotted quaffing alongside their managers.

The design is a witty 90s take on the popular sci-fi series of the 70s—*Space 1999* meets *The Jetsons*. The bright orange mash tuns, from which the bar gets both its name and its speciality beers, emphasise the mood of ironic futurism. Visitors are greeted by The Love Machine, which is a message board offering romantic profundities: “Men are from Mars, women are from Ryvita,” it told me. Judging by some of Mash’s details, Peyton seems to have a strong preference for the inhabitants of Ryvita. He has installed cameras in the men’s loos which relay to two small screens in the women’s loos. Thankfully, you can’t see anything untoward, but you can watch the less fair sex preening in the mirror.

The walls of the sunken cocktail lounge are covered with old *Playboy* ads showing the discerning *Playboy* man in his element. However, the women’s faces have been painted over by artist John Currin to transform their adoring expressions to ones of disgust. Good, clean fun with a wood-burning pizza oven upstairs.

Passion Fruit Pimms

1 slice each of orange and lemon
1 cherry
50ml Pimms Vodka Cup
25ml passion fruit nectar or juice
lemonade
squeeze of lime juice
cucumber peel
1 sprig of mint
1 strawberry and 1 raspberry

Put the citrus fruit and the cherry in the bottom of a highball glass and cover with ice. Pour in the Pimms Vodka Cup followed by the passion fruit nectar or juice. Top up with lemonade, add a squeeze of lime juice and garnish with the cucumber peel and sprig of mint. Give it a stir and float the strawberry and raspberry on the top. Created by Mash’s barman, Jamie Terrell.



HALLOWED GROUND

Another basement bar, **Saint** in Great Newport Street, near Leicester Square, lies behind a deceptively modest façade. But once past the clipboards on the doors, you descend into a fiendishly stylish bar, which has become popular with fashion and media-types. In the early evening it offers a womb-like environment decorated in muted shades of pink, purple, blue and green.

Chilling out is de rigueur and extremely easy, especially if you dissolve into one of the large, plush booths surrounding the bar. By the end of the evening, however, and particularly at weekends, Saint is invariably jumping as DJs spin an eclectic mix of “everything but house and garage”. The relaxed dining area serves modern British cuisine.

My personal favourite is Saint’s own Jamaican Mule cocktail, a zingy mixture of Morgan’s Spiced Rum, lemon and lime juice and root ginger beer.

Red Snapper

70ml Maker’s Mark bourbon
15ml chambord (raspberry liqueur)
25ml cranberry juice
1 cherry

Measure the bourbon, chambord and cranberry juice into a cocktail shaker, mix well, then pour into a chilled martini glass. Garnish with a cherry. This is strongly recommended by Saint’s bar manager, Heath Ball, who maintains, “this zippy, potent and very pretty mixture is a variation on a Manhattan—a kind of bourbon martini”.



DOCTOR’S ORDERS

Pharmacy on Notting Hill Gate has something of a dream team. Drinks’ supremo is London’s leading contender for celebrity barman, Dick Bradsell, and the decor comes courtesy of Damien Hirst. The most obvious Hirst touch is the collection of butterflies stuck to the walls of the modern French restaurant upstairs but, beyond this, the place could pass off as a legitimate pharmacy. Wall-to-wall glass cabinets are piled high with boxes of pills, suppositories and ointments with a strong bent towards “personal problems”.

Pharmacy’s styling has upset the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and foreign tourists occasionally stray inside having mistaken it for the real McCoy. “Wow!” they must think. “You can’t get a drink in a British pub after 11pm, but you can get a cocktail in the chemist’s.” And excellent cocktails they are too, mixed by Bradsell’s Babes who are all decked out in surgical coats designed by Prada. The bar is fairly-clinical, but not cold, with a buzzy, funky atmosphere generated by Notting Hill’s finest.

Russian Spring Punch

50ml vodka
25ml lemon juice
12ml cassis
champagne
dash of sugar syrup
slice of lemon
sprig of mint

Pour the vodka, lemon juice and cassis over ice in a tall glass and top it up with champagne. Stir, then add a dash of sugar syrup, and garnish with a slice of lemon and a sprig of mint.

Dick Bradsell, creator of the Russian Spring Punch, adds the warning: “It may taste innocuous but it’s actually very strong.”



ARABIAN NIGHTS

"It's a bit like a Middle Eastern bazaar—but a nice, clean one," said a friend of mine. I thought I'd stumbled inside a Bedouin's tent, but perhaps that's just nit-picking. Then again, it could be a set for a Hollywood version of *Beau Geste*. Whatever. A visit to **The Kemia Bar** just off Regent Street, beneath the exquisite North African restaurant, Momo, will transport you. It is a bar for the senses. The fragrant smell of incense hits you the moment you descend the stairs. The lighting is subdued and Arabian drums pulsate gently. The crowd was slightly older than in most of the other bars and the various couples seemed to be getting on famously. I'm not sure if they were simply intoxicated by the ambience, but the intimacy of this basement bar would make it the perfect place for carrying on an affair.

A word of warning, however. The Kemia Bar has 400 members who, obviously, take priority over non-members. The best way to guarantee having a very chilled-out cocktail here is to book a table in the restaurant in advance and to arrive early.

Momo Special

fresh mint leaves
dash of sugar syrup
dash of lemon juice
50ml vodka citron (lemon-flavoured vodka)
soda

Put some fresh mint leaves and ice in a cocktail shaker. Give it a good shake to release the oils and aromas from the mint. Add a dash of sugar syrup, a dash of lemon juice and a double shot of vodka. Shake it again then serve in a tall glass topped up with soda.

This is a sour-style cocktail, made all the more refreshing by the addition of fresh mint. It was personally recommended by Simon Mainoo, head barman at Momo.



COUTURE CULTURE

The Collection in South Kensington is for beautiful people and those who like to be seen alongside them. It holds a special place in the heart of the fashion industry and staged three major shows during London Fashion Week. Appropriately, the stunning entrance comprises a long catwalk.

At 20 metres long, the bar stretches the length of most of one wall, provoking the owner, Mogens Tholstrup, to claim that he has one of the biggest in London. The bar lies opposite the raised dining area which focuses on Pacific Rim food. Downstairs is a noodle bar for those who don't want their food to hinder some seriously enjoyable drinking.

The "must have" cocktail here is the Bellinitini which is vodka-based with peach schnapps and fresh peach juice topped up with champagne.

Rum Punch (made with Ocumare)

25ml light rum
25ml dark rum
50ml fresh orange juice
50ml passion fruit juice
dash of Angostura bitters
dash of orgeat (almond-flavoured liqueur)
squeeze of lime
slice of passion fruit
slice of lime

Shake with ice and serve in a tall glass with a squeeze of lime. Garnish with a slice of passion fruit and lime. Simon Robinson, bar manager at The Collection, makes his rum punches with a triple-distilled Peruvian rum called Ocumare (darling, what else?).



LATIN LOVERS

The **Havana** in Hanover Square is wild. There are flaming torches either side of the entrance and the vivid yellow plasterwork in the hallway looks like distressed custard. The twisted wrought-iron sofas and chairs are covered in patterns of leopard and zebra skin. Spanish influences are to the fore. If Picasso and Gaudi shared a nightmare, this would be it. Havana strives to be authentic and serves Latin American food. It specialises in fruit-flavoured Caipirinhas, but they are overly weak. The original is made only from Brazilian rum, brown sugar and crushed limes and it's virtually hallucinogenic. Cigar smoking is encouraged and the best selling stogies in the house are Monte Cristo No 2s and Cohibas.

Strawberry Caipirinha

2 or 3 strawberries
1½ teaspoons of brown sugar
50ml Cachaca (Brazilian rum)
apple juice

Crush two strawberries with brown sugar in a sturdy tumbler. Add some ice, pour in the Cachaca (pronounced "ca-sha-sa") and top up with apple juice. Garnish with remaining strawberry. Recommended by Havana's head barman, Brent Wong.

TOP OF THE HOT SPOTS

The Collection, 264 Brompton Road, SW3. Tel: 0171-225 1212.

Havana, 17 Hanover Square, W1. Tel: 0171-629 2552.

The Kemia Bar at Momo, 25 Heddon Street, W1. Tel: 0171-434 4040.

Mash, 19-21 Great Portland Street, W1. Tel: 0171-637 5555.

Pharmacy, 150 Notting Hill Gate, W11. Tel: 0171-221 2442.

Saint, 8 Great Newport Street, WC2. Tel: 0171-240 1551.



THE SCULPTURE COMPANY

Sculpture culture

Whether figurative or abstract, amusing or thought-provoking, sculpture is increasingly part of daily life in the capital. Paul & Kathy Wade reflect on the upsurge in public works of art.

In 1922, when King George V unveiled the memorial to his grandmother, Queen Victoria, outside Buckingham Palace, he knighted its creator, Sir Thomas Brock, on the spot. "Sculptors were like pop stars in those days," according to Philomena Davidson Davis of the Royal Society of British Sculptors. Today, few are household names, even though the current generation of British sculptors are among the best in the world. When a new art museum was opened in Tokyo recently, the inaugural exhibition was

dedicated to Sir Anthony Caro, Britain's most distinguished sculptor. Yet Caro has no major work on public show in the West End.

The tide, however, is on the turn. During the last decade, the art form has been integrated into many building developments, especially in the City of London and Docklands. Five years ago Chelsea Harbour hosted Sculpture 93, a pivotal outdoor display of British talent. A few months ago Gateshead's gigantic *Angel of the North*, caused the sort of national controversy unknown since Henry Moore was in his prime. Triggered by the impending millennium and benefiting from National Lottery funds, commissions are on the increase. Suddenly, sculpture is back in vogue, with unveilings in London almost

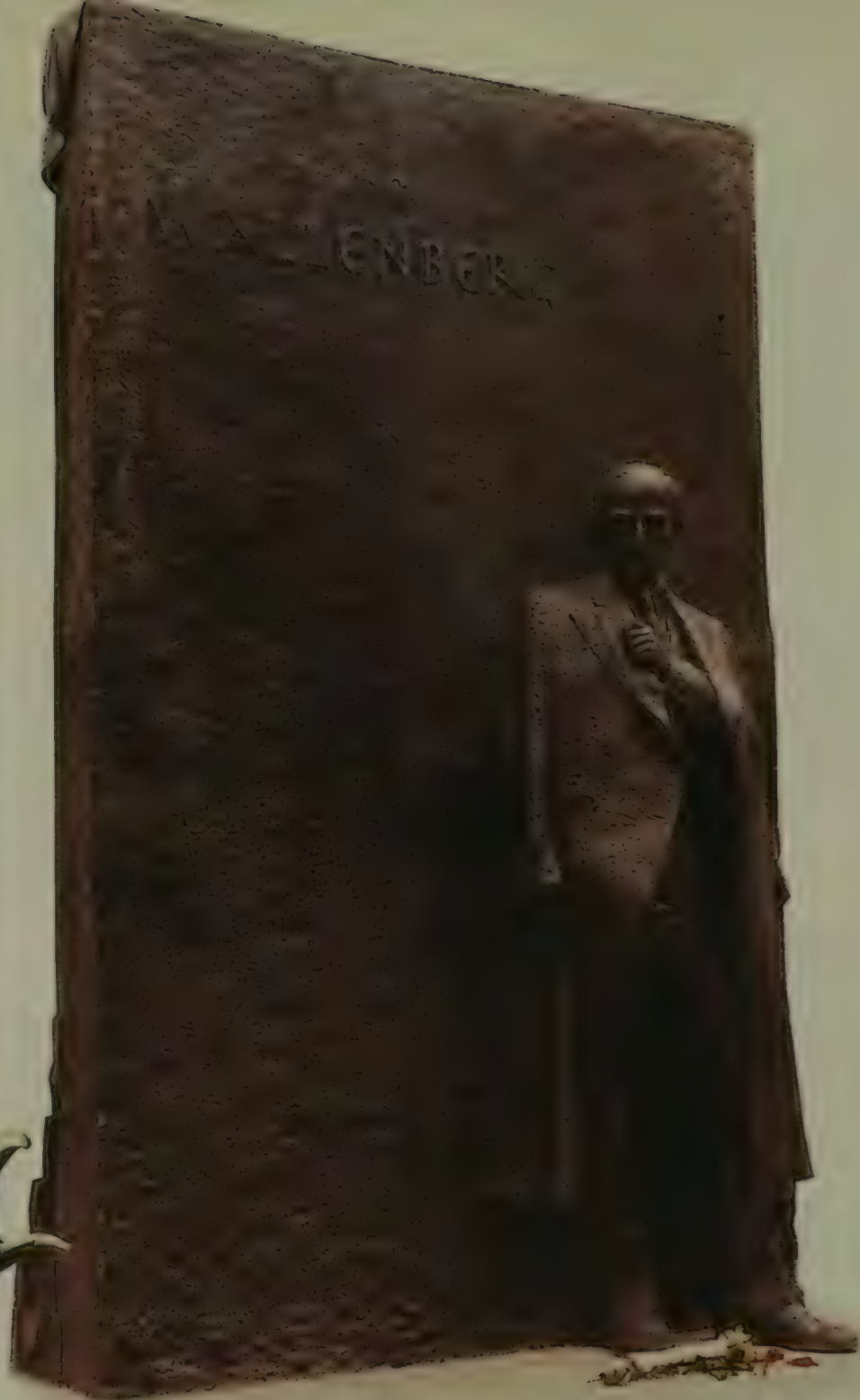
Left, Shirley Peco's statue "Jacob the Circle Dray Horse" stands near Tower Bridge. Above, William Pye's "Archimedes" thrusts out of the water at West India Quay.

every month. Some are easy to spot, like the massive figure of Isaac Newton by Eduardo Paolozzi, which stands in the piazza of the new British Library. Others, such as *Hodge*, a life-size cat, are tucked away: squatting on a thick dictionary in Gough Square off Fleet Street, this "...very fine cat indeed" stares at the home of his master, Dr Johnson. Commuters using Cannon Street station cannot miss Stephen R Melton's mobile-phone-toting trader at the bottom of Walbrook.

Because these sculptures are so public, we all turn into critics. No wonder sculptor Philip Jackson sets out to satisfy three demands: "I have to be happy, the client has to be happy and the public has to like it." This popular representational artist sees no point in putting up something that ordinary people do not enjoy, since "that does a disservice to sculpture in general". On the other hand, he does not believe in pandering to public opinion. "After all, we are responsible for something that is going to be around for hundreds of years. Sculpture can shape the images people have of us, generations from now."

His most powerful recent work is the *Wallenberg Monument*, outside the Montcalm Hotel. "This was a strong, emotive subject: a man who saved 100,000 lives in World War II." Unveiled by the Queen in 1997, the larger-than-life bronze figure of Raoul Wallenberg stands before a wall, "built" of bundles of "Schutz passes", the paper release-notes which the Swede distributed to Jewish families in Budapest. "Public sculpture should tell a story strongly and simply," insists Jackson, who draped a Swedish flag, with its cross, across one corner, "to emphasise that Wallenberg was a Christian saving Jews, performing a Christian act".

One of London's most versatile sculptors is William Pye, whose work ranges from a conventional bust in the National Portrait Gallery to giant, shiny tubes on the South Bank. Hard at work in his Battersea studio, he is obsessed by water. "Even rain running across wet roads fascinates me. I love everything to do



Philip Jackson's "Wallenburg Monument", above, honours the man who saved 100,000 lives in World War II. Jane Ackroyd's "Herring Gull", left, enlivens the space outside The Grapes pub in Narrow Street. Opposite, Stephen Melton's "LIFFE Trader" in Walbrook.



with water, even technical aspects such as hydrostatic pressure." His latest installation, at West India Quay, is *Archimedes*, a silvery screw thrusting out of the water, with which Pye has battled to make the water gush out satisfactorily since its unveiling last year. Because it stands on a floating pontoon, there are huge technical problems.

Sculptors have a special relationship with architects, according to Michael Manser, a former president of the Royal Institute of British Architects. "When a sculpture is inseparable from its building, then you know you have got it right. A piece should never be plonked down just to fill a hole." Manser's award-winning hotel, next to Terminal Four at Heathrow, has a huge interior space. "I always knew that I needed a powerful piece

there, slightly off-centre, to make it whole and complete. Allen Jones' statue of two dancers is part of the architecture, integral to the whole project, and gives it scale."

Cynthia Grant, Director for Transport Planning for the former London Docklands Development Corporation, has the same philosophy. "Sculpture can lift the spirits and provide surprises." Grant was responsible for new works all over her vast parish, from the massive portals of the Limehouse Link to Jane Ackroyd's squawking *Herring Gull* outside The Grapes pub in Narrow Street. Most intriguing are the novel bridges that she commissioned from architects working with engineers. Both the green insect-like bridge north of Canary Wharf and the curving walkway south of the tower have a sculptural quality.

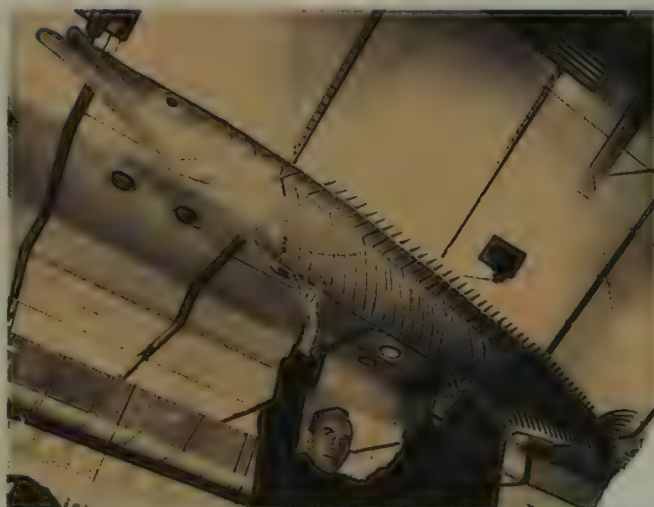
LEFT: LIDOC TOP RIGHT: CORPORATION OF LONDON



Must-see London sculpture

The Sculpture Company, the commercial arm of the Royal Society of British Sculptors, has drawn up this list of 10 "must sees" in London.

- 1 Jacob the Circle Dray Horse** by Shirley Pace.
The Circle, Tower Bridge.
- 2 Henry Purcell** by Glynn Williams.
Christchurch Gardens, Westminster.
- 3 Horse and Rider** by Elisabeth Frink.
Corner of Dover Street and Piccadilly.
- 4 Archimedes** by William Pye. West India Quay, Docklands.
- 5 Newton after Blake** by Eduardo Paolozzi. The British Library.
- 6 Winston Churchill** by Ivor Roberts Jones. Parliament Square.
- 7 Channel Tunnel Fish** by Jean-Luc Vilmouth.
Waterloo International Terminal.
- 8 Fulcrum** by Richard Serra. Broadgate.
- 9 George and the Dragon** by Michael Sandle. 2 Dorset Rise, EC4.
- 10 Circle** by John Maine. Outside the National Theatre, South Bank.



Jean-Luc Vilmouth's "Channel Tunnel Fish" at Waterloo



Hidden treasures

Here is a challenge: find the Caro gates. Beside a flyover, a few minutes walk from East India station and on a road that looks like a set for *Steptoe and Son*, stand Sir Anthony Caro's *Salome Gates*. Equally unlikely is Allen Jones' *Aerobic*, kicking a leg at frazzled commuters from Essex, in the middle of the Leamouth Roundabout, by the Esso Station.

At St Saviour's Dock, near Shakespeare's Globe, the delicacy of the swing bridge is anchored by the solid stone carving of a pepper by Peter Randall-Page, which echoes the spice trade that once thrived there.

Few places in London show off modern sculpture more effectively than Broadgate, next to Liverpool Street Station. Developer Stuart Lipton's aim was "better-quality architecture, better-quality spaces and more humanity". Uppermost in his mind was the concept of the streetscape. "The space between the buildings is more important than the buildings themselves. This is what people see most, touch most."

Artistic diversity is part of his strategy, so American Richard Serra's gigantic *Fulcrum* guarding the Eldon Street entrance to Broadgate is "controversial", *Rush Hour*, a group of tired commuters by George Segal, is "sober and makes you think", while Fernando Botero's *Broadgate Venus* is "fun".

But choosing the right sculpture is not easy. "As a building at the top of Bishopsgate, No 199 was rather lost and needed help. I had to create visual interest. We tried one sculpture that did not work, before settling on *Eye-I*, by Bruce McClean." Like an airborne sketch of a woman's face, the brightly-coloured steel work stands away from the building. "It's the right scale, and also works as a marker. Just right."

As well adding drama and panache to the outside of buildings, sculptors use their skills to enliven the interiors. Rudy Weller, known for his snorting stallions rearing up from a fountain on the corner of Coventry Street, by Piccadilly Circus, had to deflect attention from a massive metal pillar inside the entrance to Broadgate's Lasmo company headquarters. "I wrapped it in 10 tonnes of glass, with fibre optic lights playing on the coloured edges of shards of glass." Reflecting Lasmo's gas and oil exploration business, the column suggests a bore.

New sculptures are also being commissioned for ancient buildings. Canon Harvey of Westminster Abbey is responsible for what he considers "the most significant commission for years. Where else can you see 10 life-size statues in such a prominent place?" The stone carvings to which he refers are of 10 Christian martyrs of the 20th century, and the prominent place is 20 feet above the West Door of the Abbey. Apart from using photographs to get the faces right, a master sculptor and two assistants have been working much as their predecessors did in the

IRENE RHODEN/THE BRITISH LIBRARY



Above, Eduardo Paolozzi's "Newton after Blake" stands in the piazza of the new British Library. Opposite, a masted, cable-stay, S-shaped bridge linking South Quay with Heron Quays, is one of many sculptural bridges in Docklands that are true works of art.

Middle Ages, chipping away at blocks of Rougemont limestone from France. On July 9 church leaders from around the world will look on as the Archbishop of Canterbury unveils the martyrs, from continents and denominations as diverse as the USA (Martin Luther King), New Guinea (Lucian Tapiedi) and Uganda (Archbishop Janani Luwum).

To encourage young British talent, residents of Chiswick Mall in West London, with a little help from Fuller's Brewery, are commissioning pieces by sculpture students at Wimbledon College of Art. This summer *Tumbleweed*, by Georgina Miller, will be placed at the end of this popular riverside walk. "The idea is to give a youngster a break," says organiser Coco Brandon. "*Tumbleweed* will be here for two years, then we hope to commission another site-specific piece."

Whether you love them or hate them, these public works of art are direct descendants of the famous statues synonymous

"*Tumbleweed*", right, by Georgina Miller, was commissioned by the residents of Chiswick Mall.

with London. As we near the millennium, they deserve to be, quite literally, highlighted. As sculpture patron Sir Peter Michael says: "London is full of great black holes, with poorly illuminated and poorly maintained sculpture. Think of Paris, Rome or New York. We need to light up places such as Parliament Square, and erect more contemporary works in the West End, especially on the route between the National Gallery and the Tate. Wouldn't that be wonderful?"



Views to

amuse

Great food and atmosphere alone are not enough. Some of London's best restaurants have terrific views, too. And when better to appreciate them than on long, summer evenings as the sun sets. Charles Campion, 1997's Food Writer of the Year, selects his favourite rooms with a view.



Despite its surprisingly modern appearance, the **Blue Print Café**, one of Sir Terence Conran's earliest ventures, is now nearly 10 years old—which makes it almost venerable in restaurant terms. It has always offered a splendid vantage point from which to look upstream at Tower Bridge, and last year's improvements—glassing in the balcony to take the sting out of the worst of the British weather—has added to its appeal. The irrepressible Jeremy Lee heads up the kitchens and the menus reflect his passion for ultra-fresh ingredients sympathetically treated. Look out for dishes with a strong Mediterranean influence, especially Spanish cheeses and charcuterie.

Less tranquil, but just as riveting, is the view from **L'Odéon**. Those lucky enough to secure a window table can survey the whole curve of Regent Street laid out below. Inside, cocooned by air-conditioning, you'll not only find calm, but a menu that majors in striking combinations of flavour and texture—gazpacho may be paired with a lobster and basil guacamole, or a roast veal chop may come with a sweetcorn and *giovole* risotto and

marjoram-flavoured *jus*. What about a *confit* of salmon with a *pot au feu* of young vegetables? These are the sort of dishes that push forward the boundaries of what is essentially French cooking.

One of the best ways to enjoy London in the summer is to leave it! Flitting to the country is all very well, but it does pose the problem of the return journey—going is always so much easier than coming back. The trick is to go somewhere that is actually in town but is convinced it is in the country. Board a train at Victoria Station and 12 minutes and three stops later you are at West Dulwich, just five minutes' walk from **Belair House**, the Georgian Grade II-listed building on the Crown Estate which the actor Gary Cady has turned into an elegant restaurant. From the outside, it is a white island in a sea of parkland; inside, bright, original colours make it seem surprisingly modern. The young chef, Colin Barrett, uses organically-grown and -reared produce throughout the menus. Starters vary from well-made terrines, to dishes that have their roots in Mediterranean cuisine such as deep-fried goat's cheese with Provençal vegetables and pepper oil. Main courses include old favourites such as calves' liver with crisp *pancetta*, as well as more complex dishes such as red mullet, bass and scallops with tarragon noodles and lobster *jus*. Belair House has two terraces jutting out into the park like ears, both of which have amazing views, particularly when there is a good

view. The excellent Sunday lunches are fully booked several weeks in advance.

The **River Restaurant** at the Savoy has been trading on its view, and on a particular blend of formal dining and comfortable service, for decades. Its attractions are not those of fashionable restaurants, there's no fusion-food, no Thai-Mediterranean combos, no sign of the modern vernacular—and therein lies its charm. How very comforting it is to glance down Anton Edelmann's menu and recognise so many old friends. What also makes a change is to see classic dishes cooked so well and presented so elegantly. There is a new *à la carte* menu this summer (as well as a *menu du jour* for both lunch and dinner) with traditional favourites such as wild Scottish smoked salmon being joined by new dishes such as a twice-baked haddock soufflé with quail's eggs, or *mignons* of venison with cherry relish and wild mushrooms. Lunch or dinner at the River Restaurant will never be a casual or spontaneous affair, but for those occasions when you want to bask in all the attention that goes with marking a special event, the Savoy provides the gravitas that is so often missing.

Over the river and upstream a little you'll find **The People's Palace**, whose team might be surprised to find their large, modern restaurant within the Festival Hall mentioned in the same breath as the River Restaurant: it is an altogether more egalitarian kind of place. The view from the restaurant

Left, Terence Conran's Blue Print Café at Butler's Wharf has splendid Thames views from its newly glassed-in balcony. Above, Putney Bridge River Restaurant provides the ideal setting from where to watch the start of the Boat Race.



PARK LANE HILTON



Classic dishes and a view upriver are the attractions of the River Restaurant at the Savoy, left. The People's Palace at the Royal Festival Hall, above, serves a pre-theatre menu from 5-7.30pm.

here is stunning, and the food is the kind of simple but rich fare we would all like to be able to cook ourselves. *Panzanella* is an Italian bread salad—large, crisp, garlicky croutons with tomatoes, capers, red onions, basil and a red-wine-and-olive-oil dressing. Or how about a spring vegetable broth with bacon dumplings? Then there's a splendid dish featuring lightly smoked salmon escalopes which are seared before being served with fennel and orange. In the evenings, a special pre-theatre menu is served from 5-7.30pm.

A good view is often to be found just where you least expect it. Recent years have seen Soho's transformation from deeply seedy to wildly trendy. Bars, clubs and restaurants have all sprung up like mushrooms, but even they cannot equal the astonishing number of cafés that have opened. These are all places where the view is paramount and much more important than the quality of the food or drink on offer. For a genuine flavour of old Soho, head for **Maison Bertaux**. Sit outside at the rickety tables and chairs and see the whole world go by. And while you're watching, fortify yourself with London's best croissant—traditionally-made, buttery, flaky, and wildly delicious. The *café au lait* at Maison Bertaux is also a fugitive from Paris. There's even a theatre upstairs!

The view from the **Putney Bridge River Restaurant** is magnificent, as is the view of the restaurant itself. This building has won a

hatfull of architectural awards and is sited on the Thames with a grandstand view of the starting point for the Oxford and Cambridge boat race. Chef Paul Hughes has developed a menu which combines old favourites with some new twists—thus *noisettes* of lamb may be partnered by sweet potato with crushed black olives and mint *salsa verde*, and a cheddar tart may include the piquancy of *poblano* chillies. Also notable are the home-cured hams and charcuterie, and the splendid terrines. The set lunch is a bargain, especially on weekdays, and the long bar is always busy.

When the Hilton on Park Lane was being built there was considerable fuss in the media as it became apparent that it would provide a vantage point from which tourists could see into the hitherto private gardens of Buckingham Palace. The storm of publicity subsided but the view remains. **Windows on the World** on the 28th floor has one of the best views of London. On a clear night it is positively magical as you sit high above a carpet of twinkling lights. The food is equally memorable. Chef Jacques Rolancy was recently made a *Meilleur Ouvrier de France*. His signature dishes make the most of fresh produce and have an appropriately Gallic feel—pot roast monkfish with potatoes, artichokes, baby onions and bacon; or pan-fried *filet* of salmon with a *beurre nantaise* and salmon eggs. At lunch you can choose between the "Business" three-course lunch and the "Park Lane" four-course lunch. On Friday and Saturday nights there is a cover charge of £5 for the live music. As no such charge is levied for the view, it makes more sense to go midweek □

Dining rooms with a view

Prices given represent the approximate cost for two people including house wine.

Belair House , Gallery Road, Dulwich Village, London SE21 (tel: 0181-299 9788). Lunch from £50; dinner from £75.	from £56; dinner from £76.	1811). Lunch from £37; dinner from £50.
Blue Print Café , The Design Museum, Butler's Wharf, London SE1 (tel: 0171-378 7031). Lunch from £34; dinner from £40.	Maison Bertaux , 28 Greek Street, London W1 (tel: 0171-437 6007).	River Restaurant at the Savoy , The Savoy, Strand, London WC2 (tel: 0171-836 4343). Lunch from £79; dinner from £97.
L'Odéon , 65 Regent Street, London W1 (tel: 0171-287 1400). Lunch	The People's Palace , Royal Festival Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (tel: 0171-928 9999). Lunch from £36; dinner from £42.	Windows on the World , 28th Floor, The London Hilton, 22 Park Lane, London W1 (tel: 0171-493 8000). Lunch from £73; dinner from £105.
	Putney Bridge River Restaurant , Embankment, London SW15 (tel: 0181-780	

PAST master

Simon Thurley, the Museum of London's new director, reveals some exciting plans for the museum's vast collection of archaeology.



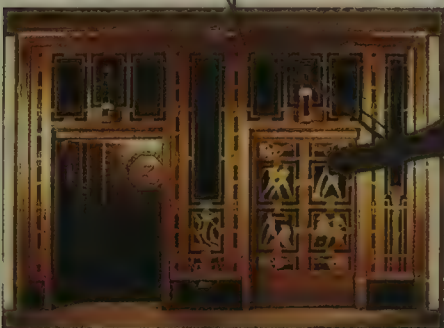
MUSEUM OF LONDON

Director of the Museum of London is a weighty title for the slim shoulders of Dr Simon Thurley, an energetic, fair-haired man in a dark, pinstripe suit dazzlingly offset by an electric blue shirt. His outfit seems to say he has a serious job, but he's determined to inject some fun into it.

Dr Thurley was elected director of the world's largest urban history museum last September, to fill the shoes of the much-respected Max Hebditch after he retired. Aged only 35, Thurley already has an impressive list of achievements under his belt. A student of architectural history at the Courtauld Institute of Art, he had his PhD thesis, *Royal Palaces of Tudor England*, published by Yale University Press, before going on to become first curator of the Historic Royal Palaces. In his seven years there, he was responsible for large-scale restoration projects such as the repair of the fire-damaged wing at Hampton Court and the creation of a new house for the Crown Jewels at the Tower of London.

So what attracted him to the Museum of London? "Well, first of all, London has the most fascinating history and a wonderful way of revealing itself suddenly and rather unexpectedly," he explains with enthusiasm. "You turn a corner and bump into something and think, goodness, I hadn't noticed that before, and it turns out to be some incredible part of London's past that has been woven into the fabric of the city. And I thought it would be exciting to come to

Thurley's favourite things: a Roman bikini and an art deco lift.



a museum which offered the opportunity not only to show history, but to discover it: more than 100 archaeologists are working here."

The Barbican-based museum tells the story of London from prehistoric times to the 20th century. Dr Thurley's three favourite exhibits—a Roman bikini, an 18th-century case of surgical instruments and an Art Deco lift from Selfridges—illustrate the range of items to be found in this *Wunderkammer* (cabinet of curiosities), as he puts it.

But what most people don't realise is that the museum is keeper of London's entire archaeological collection. The majority isn't on show—of its 1,100,000 objects, only 10,000 are displayed. Thurley explains: "We are constantly adding to our huge archive, which is the product of almost 100 years of archaeology in London. We have 200,000 boxes of small finds (pottery, bones, leather, glass), 200 palettes of stonework, 800 containers full of environmental samples, or mud, to the layman—and that's just for starters."

But storage has become a problem. The museum owns two warehouses in Hackney, the larger of which it must vacate in September because the lease has run out. It's a cause for concern but, says Thurley, "We have a cunning plan. We intend to make alterations to our other warehouse and turn it into something absolutely unique: a centre for archaeological research which is open to everybody.

It will give somebody who lives in Richmond, Catford or Clapham the opportunity to visit us or tap into us through the Internet to find out what we have from their street. They can just come and use it like a library, to look up what's in their area."

The building houses the museum's social history collections, which range from early domestic appliances to fixtures and fittings from chemist's shops, to old vehicles, including the Duke of Wellington's carriage. A tour

round the warehouse is a journey of nostalgia, the textures and even smells (leather, coal) of bygone eras magically evoked. "The collections are remarkable," says Thurley. "They contain everything from the private urinal from the royal box at Covent Garden, to a 1960s jukebox, to London's first mainframe computer. We have everything in there."

When the centre is established, Thurley hopes it can be used to send artefacts out to schools. "For instance, we should like to be able to send every school in Southwark its own Roman museum. A nice box containing a Roman shoe, a brick, a pot, some bones, glass, nails plus a video, maybe, and a teacher's pack. So every schoolchild in Southwark would have the opportunity of holding in his or her hand a piece of the area's history.

"As well as being a fantastic academic resource, it will also be a place for ordinary people to experience the thrill of touching something and saying, 'gosh, that was a cup that my Roman ancestors drank out of'."

The new centre is currently being designed, which is the first step in the proceedings. The second is to knock on the door of the Lottery people and to raise funds elsewhere. "We're putting pressure on the Department of Culture to help us. Because, funnily enough, this archive isn't really the museum's problem. It's London's problem, we just happen to be looking after it."

If all goes well, building will start next spring and the museum will move in the year after. Hopefully it will solve the problem of the capital's archaeology storage for good.

The research centre is just one of Thurley's projects. There are several issues the Museum needs to address: it has never quite managed to get itself on the tourist beaten track, nor has it been very good at blowing its own trumpet—and plans are afoot to change this. Expect to hear much more from the Museum's dynamic new director in the autumn.

JULIA PEAREY

□ Museum of London, London Wall, London EC2Y (0171-600 3699). Tours around the Museum's social collections in Hackney are occasionally organised. Details are published in the *Events and Exhibitions* booklet, which you can receive by writing to the Marketing Office, Museum of London and asking to be put on their mailing list.

From the archives of **THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS**

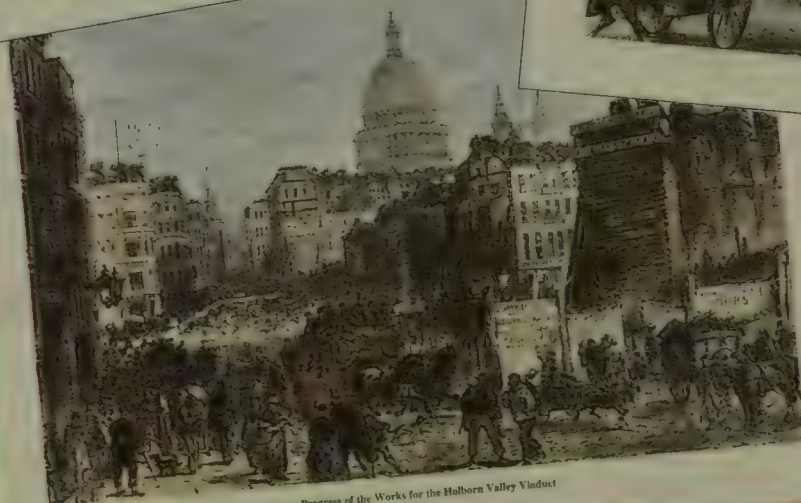
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Volunteer Force

It's not just for students: Judy Jones meets the growing band of older people who sign up with VSO to take their skills abroad.

Buying a country cottage and pottering in the garden were once archetypal retirement dreams, but many of today's vigorous 50 and 60-somethings are horrified at the notion of slowing down. Challenge and adventure are their spurs, plus the chance to share valuable employment skills that could otherwise wither away along with the "downsized" job or the boss's farewell bouquet. This growing band of ex-employees is resisting the lure of the potting shed and the herbaceous border to join an alternative and largely unsung workforce. They become volunteers, helping others to plug skill gaps in a host of occupations and professions both at home and, increasingly, abroad.

The upsurge in early retirement and redundancy has been a bitter pill to swallow for many in the 1990s, yet the ending of conventional paid employment has galvanised increasing numbers to strike out in a new direction, enriching

their lives by helping others.

Thousands of active and skilled older people are

carving out new roles for themselves in this way. Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, is among the organisations tapping this rich vein of experience and talent to help the developing world.

"It gives you the chance to reinvent yourself," says Dee Humphries, 65, who returned from a two-year VSO stint training teachers in Africa last year. For Dee, it had been a long-held ambition. Taking early retirement from her job in London as an adviser to an education authority gave her the chance to fulfil it. She rented out her home in Wimbledon and headed for a small village school 7,000 feet above sea level in Eritrea, a country struggling to heal the scars of civil war. Here, she transformed a small room into a prototype workshop where she developed "child-centred" education aids and strategies with local teachers, many of whom had fought in the war.

"You had to be resourceful," recalls Dee. "I remember making a solar-powered oven out of two large cardboard boxes, a piece of glass and two rolls of tin foil. It made wonderful bean casseroles, and it had great entertainment value!" Although fruit and vegetables

were available locally, shopping for other staples and supplies meant Dee had to cycle for two hours each week to the nearest town and back. She and her colleagues had to filter all their water, and become accustomed to using a pit latrine. But the physical hardships were eclipsed by the friendship, commitment and inspiration she found in this highland community. "People treated me with such warmth. I felt privileged to have had the experience and came back to London feeling fitter than I had for years."

In its early years, VSO was commonly seen as an agency for footloose, idealistic youngsters wanting to serve abroad before taking university degree courses or stepping on to the career ladder. Channel 4 newsreader Jon Snow taught in Uganda for VSO in the 1960s. "I had never been abroad before and it was a real adventure," he says. "I was changed by VSO. You really discover what you have to offer, and it transforms your sense of the world." Other past volunteers include Hilary Armstrong, now Local Government and Housing Minister, and broadcasters Michael Brunson and Brian Hanrahan.

The average age of the VSO volunteer has risen steadily since the 1970s, and now stands

Actor Richard Wilson has recently filmed VSO projects to raise awareness of the call for older volunteers. Below, a village in Eritrea, a country in need of VSO skills as it recovers from civil war.





Above, teachers in a village school in Eritrea attending maths and science workshops organised by VSO volunteer Dee Humphries, right, with some of her students.

at 34. About a quarter of VSO volunteers are over 40 nowadays, up from about 10 per cent in the 1970s. Maturity, specialist know-how and a broad experience of life are the qualities most in demand by the organisation's partner employers in the developing countries, not wide-eyed youthful exuberance and wanderlust. Actor Richard Wilson—Victor Meldrew in the BBC sit-com *One Foot In The Grave*—has recently filmed VSO projects in South Africa and the Philippines and helped raise funds for the organisation as part of its effort to reach out to older people. It was not his curmudgeonly television character that resonated with potential VSO

recruits, but more the circumstances that helped to shape it. Victor's struggle for a useful role in life, after redundancy, creates a pathos with which millions of older people can clearly identify.

Just months after being made redundant from her personnel and training manager job in Leeds, Jean Satterthwaite, 61, was drawing up recruitment and selection policies for a large organisation in Bangalore providing mobility aids and support for disabled people. "Mrs Jean" as she became known in her new role, describes her stint in southern India as "two of the best years of my life. Many people in India end up on the streets begging, or sitting in a corner at home if they have a disability because there is no social security. It was fabulous for me, at my age, to join a team whose work really made a difference to people's lives."



When she returned last December, her four children had gathered at Leeds airport to greet her with a banner saying, "Welcome home Mrs Jean". So successful was her venture that Jean is due to go back to Bangalore this summer for a second VSO assignment. "I'd recommend it to anyone in my position, provided you are physically fit and your grey cells are still functioning!"

"Older people are often able to achieve more as volunteers because with experience of life comes an ability to overcome obstacles," says Simon Watts, of VSO. "Redundancy and early retirement can leave a gap in people's lives. It can be much more rewarding for them to go on applying their skills

where they are still needed overseas rather than sitting around in a Jobclub in the UK."

As time has gone on, VSO partner employers in 59 developing countries have asked increasingly for more highly-skilled volunteers. Britain's buoyant economy and the emergence of skill shortages at home means these requests cannot always be met. While overall applications from volunteers for VSO placements have dropped by 22 per cent over the last two years, those in the 55-plus age group are increasing.

Some people, tempted by the idea of doing VSO, might worry about leaving children and grandchildren for so long. Teacher Ron Halley and his wife Margaret, a trained nursery nurse, had no such misgivings before packing their bags to work at a school in Malawi. "We were very involved with our family—we have 13 grandchildren. But you can overdo it," says Ron, who took early retirement from his teaching job in Edinburgh, and embarked on his VSO posting at the age of 59. "You can be rushing around all the time for them, and we felt it wouldn't do them or us any harm at all to be independent of each other for a couple of years."

The couple worked hard—each class had about 60 pupils. But they were also able to travel from time to time, and enjoyed swimming in Lake Malawi. "VSO takes good care of you at each stage, from the pre-placement training right through the posting. There were times when you felt down in the dumps, but not for long. We found it a very satisfying experience, one we'll always remember."

Clearly, the contribution of older people can make all the difference to VSO and to people overseas struggling to modernise their economies. Clare Short, Secretary of State for International Development, believes VSO has done an "enormously impressive job" over the last 40 years, but warns that: "If the international community is to achieve its aim of halving world poverty by 2015—and we shall all be in trouble if we don't—then more volunteers are needed. I hope everyone with an interest in a more just and stable world will take seriously the opportunities of VSO."

□ For details contact: VSO, 317 Putney Bridge Road, London SW15 2PN. Tel: 0181-780 7200.

Like Jean Satterthwaite, left, and Margaret Halley, below, a quarter of VSO volunteers are now over 40. Right, former volunteer Jon Snow.





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THEATRE

Musicals make the loudest noise this summer with revivals of *Oklahoma!* & *Sweet Charity*, & new shows such as *Whistle Down the Wind* & *Doctor Dolittle*. Repertory theatre goes alfresco at the Open Air Theatre & at Shakespeare's Globe, while Peter Hall's company offers an indoor season at the Piccadilly Theatre. A triple bill of vintage Pinter features the playwright himself, & Fiona Shaw proves she's in her prime as Miss Jean Brodie.

Addresses & telephone numbers are given on the first occasion a theatre's entry appears.

Doctor Dolittle: Phillip Schofield talks to the animals.



As You Like It. The second repertory season at Shakespeare's Globe begins on May 28 with his romantic comedy in which it's remarked that "all the world's a stage". After making us believe we've been in the forest of Arden, the actors move to Italy for *The Merchant of Venice* (opens May 29) & the Restoration comedy *The Honest Whore* (Aug 13) before returning to 17th-century London for farce with a gothic touch in *A Mad World, My Masters* (Aug 14). The season runs until Sept 20. *Shakespeare's Globe, Bankside, SE1 (0171-401 9919)*.

Copenhagen. Michael Frayn's latest play is based around a mysterious meeting in 1941 in occupied Copenhagen between

physicist Werner Heisenberg & his old Danish teacher & colleague, Niels Bohr. David Burke, Matthew Marsh & Sara Kestelman head the cast, with regular Frayn collaborator Michael Blakemore directing. Opens May 28. *Cottesloe, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (0171-452 3000)*.

Doctor Dolittle. Unlike Rex Harrison in the 1968 feature film, Phillip Schofield wants to sing as well as talk to the animals in this £4 million stage adaptation. Leslie Bricusse has adapted his original film score & added three new songs, while the good doctor's menagerie is

brought to life by the technical wizardry of Jim Henson's Creature Shop. Steven Pimlott directs. Opens

The Dream: Ian Talbot plays a charming Bottom at the Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park.



July 14. *Labatt's Apollo, Hammersmith, W6 (0171-344 4444)*.

The Doctor's Dilemma. Personal & ethical considerations hinder the care of a consumptive but philandering artist in George Bernard Shaw's 1906 drama. Alec McCowen & Ian McDiarmid are the eminent medical men caught up in the debate about the value of a human life. June 3-23. *Almeida Theatre, Almeida St, N1 (0171-359 4404)*.

Elton John's Glasses. Seen last year at the Palace Theatre, Watford, David Farr's sly comedy of sibling rivalry, defeat & despair gets a deserved West End transfer. Brian Conley joins the production's original cast as the agoraphobic Watford football supporter whose life is turned upside down by the arrival of his brother's no-hope rock band & the daughter of his secret lover. Opens June 10. *Queen's, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (0171-494 5040)*.

Kat & the Kings. An exuberant musical from South Africa about a group of coloured teenagers in an apartheid-defying district of Cape Town in the 50s who form a close-harmony quartet & enjoy brief fame. Essentially a song & dance show, its lack of plot is compensated for by its energy & infectious songs. *Vaudeville, Strand, WC2 (0171-836 9987)*.

The London Cuckolds. Accident-prone rake pursues three gleefully faithless wives in this Restoration comedy by Edward Ravenscroft. Terry Johnson's new adaptation, played out on an attractive mock-theatrical set, sometimes seems

like a compendium of familiar farcical situations, but it's

acted with such verve & vigour that the cobwebs are blown away. Caroline Quentin, as a lusty, sarcastic wife, leads a likeable cast. *Lyttelton, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (0171-452 3000)*.

Major Barbara. Peter Hall directs his first-ever Shaw play with Jemma Redgrave as the daughter of an arms manufacturer who joins the Salvation Army & tries to convert the rich. With Peter Bowles, Anna Carteret & David Yelland. Runs in



When it's not just the ticket

Give 'em the old hocus pocus/Bead and feather 'em/ How can they see with sequins in their eyes?" sings the slinky chorus line of *Chicago*, the sexy musical about two 20s showgirls who, with the help of a money-grabbing lawyer, dupe the public and get away with murder. It's currently one of the most successful shows in London and, like other popular West End productions, is being used by touts and agencies to make a financial killing.

Tourists have usually been the easy prey for touts, paying up to £300 for tickets to theatre and sporting events. But there is another way in which theatregoers have to pay more than the face value of the ticket....and it's perfectly legal. Ticket agencies are making huge profits from the extra fees charged for credit card bookings.

Originally, regulations which allowed agencies to put a surcharge on credit card purchases were designed to help them recoup the administration costs they are charged by the credit card companies. This fee, known as the merchant service charge, is usually between one and five per cent. However, many agencies are imposing far higher booking fees.

"There is clearly room for ticket agencies to exploit this situation," says David Joyce, an economist with the Credit Card Research Group. "Dual pricing (charging for credit card transactions but not cash payments) is unfair and distorting the market." Ticket agencies negotiate deals with theatre producers or concert promoters to buy blocks of tickets in advance, which can be at a discount. "The booking fees are set between the producers and the ticket agencies, and that can be anything up to 25 per cent on top of the face value of the ticket," explains a spokesperson at the Society of London Theatre. "Rogue or bogus agencies often don't make it clear that they have added a booking fee."

It's sharp practice like this which prompted the formation of the Society of Ticket Agents and Retailers (STAR). "We had no regulatory authority or organisation involved in the ticketing industry," says its secretary, Mike Everitt. "Now agents and venues who sign up as members of STAR will guarantee to set out the face value, booking fees, and any conditions attached to tickets when they sell them."

When I phoned three major London agencies about *Chicago*, each stated the face value of the tickets and explained their booking fees. They varied dramatically. TicketSelect charges 15 per cent, while First Call's fees range from £3 for a £15 ticket to £7.15 for a £32.50 stall seat. Ticketmaster, on the other hand, charges only £1 per ticket.

When booking in advance, it's best to use the credit card booking number displayed on a show's pre-publicity. You will then be getting through to an agency which is acting on behalf of the venue and will generally offer the most reasonable booking fees.

Purchasing tickets at the box office is often inconvenient and impractical, but it's still the preferable option, particularly for theatregoers. You can see the theatre's seating plan, know exactly where you will be sitting, and avoid the booking fees.



DONALD CROPPER/PHOTOFEST



Kat & the Kings:
Finger-clicking song & dance show from a very talented young cast.

The Tempest:
Robert Glenister is Caliban at the RSC in Stratford, directed by Adrian Noble.

repertory with *The Misanthrope*. Piccadilly Theatre, Denman St, W1 (0171-369 1734).

A Midsummer Night's Dream.
The alfresco theatre season in Regent's Park begins with a revival of last year's boisterous, Edwardian-dressed production of *The Dream*

involving lusty lovers & frisky fairies. Debby Bishop returns as a voluptuous Hippolyta & Ian Talbot as Bottom. Opening on May 26, it is joined in repertory by Shakespeare's cynical *Troilus & Cressida* (opens June 11), the musical *Gentleman Prefer Blondes*, with Sara Crowe as gold-digger Lorelei Lee (July 23), & a youth theatre production of *The Jungle Book* (Aug 4). The season runs until Sept 5. Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park, NW1 (0171-486 2431).

The Misanthrope.
Though missing the ambiguities of Molière's comedy,



The London Cuckolds:
Caroline Quentin leads the bawdy entertainment.



The world's his stage

When the Jermyn Street theatre opened following a £77,000 lottery grant refurbishment in March, it boasted, at its helm, the youngest artistic director in the world. Londoner David Babani is just 20 and still a drama student at Bristol University, but demand for his talents in the West End has led to his being granted an indefinite sabbatical.

The intimate, 70-seat theatre was founded just four years ago when Howard Jameson was looking for a venue to stage a musical written by one of his friends. He was unable to persuade a West End theatre to take it, but the author happened to know of some space going spare beneath the Spaghetti House in Jermyn Street. These former staff changing rooms were converted into a cosy theatre, which was then rented out to theatre companies and has since attracted the likes of Bonnie Langford, Andrew O'Connor and Noel Harrison (Rex's son).

With Babani on board, the theatre is set to become less of a rentable space and more its own boss.

Recommended for the job by the former artistic director, Neil Marcus, Babani hopes to programme more straight theatre, "nice, intimate plays", which he will produce himself, along with the musicals and cabaret for which the theatre is renowned.

Babani's rise to fame has been meteoric, but his passion for theatre started at 13, at Highgate School, where he first became interested in lighting, and moved on to directing plays. He won a National Student Drama award for his production of *Death and the Maiden* at nearby Jackson's Theatre. At Bristol University he struck up a friendship with director Sam Buntrock, when they worked together on *Sweeney Todd*, and the two



Babani: "My youth has never really been a help, nor a hindrance."

went on to stage Stephen Sondheim's *Assassins* at New End Theatre, Hampstead. The production had author John Weidman flying over from New York to check it out, and as a result, both Weidman and Sondheim are now talking to Babani about a touring production later this year. Babani is continuing to produce elsewhere. He has obtained the rights to stage the Tony-award-winning *Falsetto*, which has never been performed in the UK, and plans to organise "a bit of Broadway" for early next year. Despite his youth, his air of confidence makes you realise that whatever he does, he'll make it.

John Meyer's film noir musical, *The Betrayal of Nora Blake*, is currently at the Jermyn Street Theatre, 16b Jermyn St, London SW1 (0171-287 2875).

JULIA PEAREY

Joe Harmston directs Lia Williams, Douglas Hodge & Pinter himself in two plays about marriage & relationships, *The Lover* (1963) & *The Collection* (1961). Until June 13.

Donmar Warehouse, Earlham St, WC2 (0171-369 1732).

Whistle Down the Wind. After a poorly-received pre-Broadway run in Washington last year, Andrew Lloyd Webber decided to rework his latest musical which now opens in London. Based on Mary Hayley Bell's gentle novel about a group of children who mistake an escaped convict for Jesus, it transposes the action from England to Louisiana in 1959. Gale Edwards, who managed to reinvigorate *Jesus Christ Superstar* last year, directs.

Opens July 1. Aldwych Theatre, Aldwych, WC2 (0171-416 6003).

OUT OF TOWN

RSC season at Stratford: *The Tempest*, directed by Adrian Noble, with David Calder as Prospero; *The Merchant of Venice*, directed by Gregory Doran, with Philip Voss as Shylock; *Measure for Measure*, directed by Michael Boyd, with Clare Holman as Isabella; *Twelfth Night*, directed by Adrian Noble, with Helen Schlesinger as Viola. At the Swan: *Talk of the City*, by Stephen Poliakoff, directed by the author; *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, directed by Edward Hall; *Bartholomew Fair* by Ben Jonson, directed by Laurence Boswell. At The Other Place: *Bad Weather*, by Robert Holman, directed by Steven Pimlott; *Shadows*, three plays by J M Synge & W B Yeats; *Roberto Zucco* by Bernard-Marie Koltes; *Goodnight Children Everywhere* by Richard Nelson, directed by Ian Brown. Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwicks CV37 6BB (01789 295623).

IAN JOHNS

Peter Hall's production is always lucid. Michael Pennington is excellent as the noble, high-minded critic who falls in love with a hypocritical society beauty (a rather bland Elaine Paige). Runs in repertory with *Major Barbara*. Piccadilly Theatre.

The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie. The sharp-minded schoolmistress in 1930s Edinburgh created by Muriel Spark, & made famous by Maggie Smith on film, now takes charge of her pupils in the shape of Fiona Shaw. Phyllida Lloyd directs. Opens June 25. Lyttelton, National Theatre.

The Real Inspector Hound/Black Comedy. An inspired pairing of ingenious one-act comedies from the mid-60s begins with Tom Stoppard's *The Real Inspector Hound*, in which two self-obsessed theatre critics are drawn into the clichéd murder-mystery they have come to review. Then, in Peter Shaffer's *Black Comedy*, the stage remains fully lit to let us see the cast blunder around a flat plunged into darkness by a power cut. An amusing evening of the silly & the cerebral. Until July 11. Comedy, Panton St, SW1 (0171-369 1731).

Rent. Inspired by Puccini's opera *La Bohème*, Jonathan Larson's rock musical, set among the musicians, junkies & drug dealers of Manhattan's Lower East Side, caused a sensation on Broadway last year. Original cast members Anthony Rapp, Wilson

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

Oklahoma! The National had a major success in 1992 with Rodgers' & Hammerstein's *Carousel*, & now presents its first Broadway show. Set among the cattlemen & farmers of the American West at the turn of the century, its central story involves the love of a cowboy for a farmer's daughter who is also desired by a sinister hired hand. Maureen Lipman heads the cast for Trevor Nunn's major revival, which promises to be a rousing production from its famous opening, "Oh, What a beautiful Mornin'", to its conclusion with the title song, July 6-Sept 5. Olivier, National Theatre.

Jermaine Heridia, Jesse L Martin & Adam Pascal take part in this British premiere. Shaftesbury Theatre, Shaftesbury Ave, WC2 (0171-379 5399).

Sweet Charity. "Hey, big spender! Spend a little time with me", sings Bonnie Langford as the dance hall hostess looking for love in this revival of the 1966 Broadway musical which uses the original, slinky choreography of Bob Fosse. Victoria Palace, Victoria St, W1 (0171-834 1317).

Things We Do for Love. In a deft mixture of ribald humour & heartfelt

emotion, Alan Ayckbourn's superb tragi-comedy explores the consuming power of lust. Jane Asher is excellent as glacial spinster Barbara who becomes infatuated with the fiancé of an old school friend, & Barry McCarthy is hilarious as the pathetic handyman who lusts after her. Gielgud, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (0171-494 5065).

Three by Pinter. A triple bill of one-act plays by Harold Pinter begins with *A Kind of Alaska* (1982). Karel Reisz directs Penelope Wilton, Bill Nighy & Brid Brennan in a drama about a patient who awakes from a trance-like state after 29 years. Then

Blues Brothers:
Together again.





CINEMA

Old favourites never seem to die. Returning on British screens this summer are the *Blues Brothers*, *Mr Magoo* & *Godzilla*, all reincarnated anew. Controversy is generated by Adrian Lyne's long-awaited remake of *Lolita*, which he claims follows the novel more faithfully than the Stanley Kubrick version. The sensitivity of the story, in which a middle-aged man becomes obsessed with a pubescent girl, will arouse concern in many quarters. A more wholesome approach to female adolescence can be observed in *The Girl with Brains in Her Feet*, an unpretentious British film produced by Don Boyd.

Afterglow. Julie Christie plays a former horror-movie actress married to a handyman with a roving eye, played by Nick Nolte. One of his clients (Lara Flynn Boyle) wants him

to father the baby her husband is too busy to provide. Alan Rudolph has fun crossing the class divide, & Christie acts better than ever. Opens May 29. **Blues Brothers 2000.** Dan Aykroyd returns after 18 years as Elwood Blues



in John Landis' sequel, which has much the same plot as the first film, except that John Belushi is no longer alive to play his sibling. Released from prison, Elwood learns that his brother Jake is dead. He tries to reassemble the Chicago blues band whose members include John Goodman & J Evan Bonifant. There is yet another destructive police car chase & a massive concert at the climax.

Dark City. In this intriguing mystery Rupert Sewell wakes up in a hotel room to find he is wanted as a serial killer, but has no recollection of the crimes. William Hurt is the detective on his trail in this disconcerting study of Sewell's struggle to regain his identity. Others in the film, directed & co-written by Alex Poyas, are Kiefer Sutherland, Jennifer Connelly & Richard O'Brien. Opens May 29.

The Scarlet Tunic: *A tale of love betrayed and lives destroyed, based on a short story by Thomas Hardy.*

Godzilla:

The 50s Japanese giant horror returns to terrify New Yorkers, above left.

The James Gang:

A Scottish family learns to help themselves, above right.

The Girl With Brains in Her Feet:

Joanna Ward, left, survives adolescence in 70s Leicester.

The General. The new film from British director John Boorman, who lives in Ireland, is the story of the legendary Irish criminal Martin Cahill, who became a folk hero with his assassination in 1994. He is played by Brendan Gleeson, & others in the cast include Jon Voight, Adrian Dunbar, Maria Doyle Kennedy & Angeline Ball. Opens May 29.

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

The Girl with Brains in Her Feet. Roberto Bangura's refreshing, warmly humorous film is set in an authentic-looking Leicester of the 1970s. Joanna Ward plays a schoolgirl with a single mother, & is beset with the problems of adolescence. Her chief talent is an ability to run fast, & she is encouraged by an over-enthusiastic sports teacher who even has the art mistress sacked for also making demands on her time. Opens June 12.

Godzilla. One of this summer's breathtaking special-effects blockbusters is a spectacular reprise of a Japanese monster of the 1950s, a giant reptile, 90 feet high, disturbed in its slumbers by a nuclear blast. Matthew Broderick & Jean Reno are



among those who try to stop it from destroying New York. The director is Roland Emmerich. Opens July 17.

The James Gang. In Mike Barker's film a Scottish family becomes a gang of robbers after the mother (Helen McGory) is deserted by her spouse (John Hannah). Using her four children as accomplices, she sets out on an ambitious series of smash-&-grab raids, with the bemused police on the trail. The handsome locations are actually in Wales.

The Last Time I Committed Suicide. A letter written in the 1950s by a would-be poet, Neal Cassady (Thomas Jane), to the writer Jack Kerouac is the basis of Stephen Kay's film. Cassady hangs out with his pal (Keanu Reeves) in a Denver pool hall, gets drunk & talks ad nauseam, & although the structure is messy, the spirit of the beat era is satisfyingly captured. Opens June 12.

Lolita. Adrian Lyne's endeavour to film Nabokov's controversial novel looks magnificent & is more sexually explicit than Kubrick's version. Jeremy Irons appears pensive as the tormented Humbert Humbert. Melanie Griffith is Lolita's distracted mother & the nymphlet herself is disturbingly played by Dominique Swain who is closer to the right age & projects the right blend of shameless temptress & exploited innocent. Lyne, however, misses much of Nabokov's irony.

Mad City. Dustin Hoffman is a television reporter who has hit a bad patch after a run-in with a star anchorman (Alan Alda). A gun carried by John Travolta, a sacked museum attendant, is accidentally fired, injuring another guard, & Hoffman, having been present, seizes the opportunity to milk the situation as a hostage crisis in order to restore his prestige. Costa Gavras directs this attempt to show how television can dictate the public perception of events. Opens July 3.

Mr Magoo. In the farce directed by Stanley Tong, Lesley Nielsen plays the myopic millionaire, affectionately remembered from 1950s cartoons. The jokes, in which his bad eyesight gets him into trouble without his even being aware of it, pall, & excellent as Nielsen is, live action is less suited to the subject than animation.

The Scarlet Tunic. Thomas Hardy's short story *The Melancholy Hussar*, the origin of his full-length novel *The Trumpet Major*, is the basis of this new British film directed by Stuart St Paul. Emma Fielding plays a Wessex girl betrothed to a wealthy businessman (John Sessions). Catastrophically she falls in love with a dashing young sergeant (Jean-Marc Barr). A devious & jealous officer (Simon Callow) then targets him. Opens June 12.

GEORGE PERRY

OPERA

The Glyndebourne season opens with a new production by Graham Vick of *Così fan tutte*, which also launches a new cycle of the Mozart-Da Ponte operas, while Garsington presents the composer's early work *Lucio Silla*. English National Opera gives the world première of *Doctor Ox's Experiment* by Gavin Bryars, & a new staging of Massenet's *Manon*. Trisha Brown directs Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* at the Barbican. Opera North mounts Verdi's rarely-heard *Joan of Arc*. David Pountney directs *Boris Godunov* for Welsh National Opera.

BARBICAN THEATRE

Silk St, EC2 (0171-638 8891).

L'Orfeo. Monteverdi's landmark opera, directed by US choreographer Trisha Brown & danced by her own company. The music is performed by two baroque ensembles, the Concerto Vocale & Collegium Vocale Ghent, under the baton of René Jacobs. The cast includes Simon Keenlyside & Carlo Allemano. June 3-6.

THE ENGLISH OPERA

London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-632 8300).

Manon. David McVicar directs a new production, designed by Tanya McCallin, with Rosa Mannion singing the role of the tragic heroine, John Hudson as Chevalier des Grieux, Ashley Holland as Lescaut. Paul Daniel conducts. May 28, 30, June 4, 6, 10, 12, 18.

Carmen. Jonathan Miller's strongly focused production, with Sally Burgess as Carmen. David Rendall as Don José, Margaret Richardson as Micaela, Roberto Salvatori as Escamillo; Noel Davies conducts. May 29, June 3, 5, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 26, July 1.

Doctor Ox's Experiment. World première of Gavin Bryars' new work set to a text by Blake Morrison after Jules Verne, produced by film director Atom Egoyan, making his opera debut. James Holmes conducts & Bonaventura Bottone sings Doctor Ox. June 15, 20, 24, 30, July 3.

Falstaff. Donald Maxwell steps into the role of the amorous fat knight in Matthew Warchus' staging; Rita Cullis repeats her fine performance as Alice, with Susan Bickley as Meg, Frances McCafferty as Mistress Quickly. Paul Daniel conducts. June 25, 27, 29, July 2, 4.

THEATRE KERNOW

Bloomsbury Theatre, 15 Gordon St, W1 (0171-388 8822).

Così fan tutte. Performed by a chamber orchestra & sung in a new English translation; Nicholas Bone directs & designs, Jonathan Gill conducts. July 21, 22, 24, 25.



LYRIC HAMMERSMITH

Lyric Hammersmith, King St, W6 (0181-741 2311).

The Maids. New music theatre work by John Lunn, based on the play by Jean Genet; brothers Christopher & Nigel Robson sing the title roles. Olivia Fuchs directs. June 5-20.

OUT OF TOWN

THE ADVENTURES OF VIXEN SHARP-EARS

Graham Vick directs Janáček's enchanting opera about a family of foxes. City Hall, Salisbury (01722 327679); May 28. Music Hall, Shrewsbury (01743 244255); May 30.

LA CENERENTOLA

Juliet Norman sings Cinderella in Leah Hausman's staging, updated to the 1950s.



Le Comte Ory: The Countess & her ladies await the crusaders' return in Glyndebourne's production.

Dr Ox's Experiment: Bonaventura Bottone, below, sings the lead in Gavin Bryars' work for English National.



The Maids: Brothers Nigel & Christopher Robson sing the title roles, with Emma Selway as their mistress, left.

Garsington expands

Garsington marks its tenth anniversary with an attractive trio of Italian operas, one familiar, two less so, and 10 per cent more seating capacity—good news for the would-be operagoers who have previously been unable to obtain tickets.

Founded in 1989 by Leonard Ingrams and his wife, Rosalind, Garsington has built up a devoted audience with its repertoire of mainly 18th-century opera. Performances are given on a terrace which lends itself admirably to adaptation as a stage. The tiers of covered seating are erected in the garden and this year will accommodate an audience of 440.

Garsington Manor is a small Jacobean house dating from about 1630. It was bought in 1915 by Philip and Lady Ottoline Morrell who transformed both house and garden and made it a meeting place for the world of arts and letters of their day. Eminent visitors included D H Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, Siegfried Sassoon, T S Eliot and Virginia Woolf. Part of the attraction of a visit to the opera is the chance to explore the grounds, which comprise an Italian garden with a lake surrounded by statues, a charming parterre set with 24 square beds edged with box, through which operagoers approach the auditorium, and a wild garden with a fishpond and a dell. There is a grassy slope where a tent is erected for the long-interval picnic which is part of the occasion. Or supper can be taken in the Great Barn.



Exploring the gardens is part of the pleasure of attending an opera performance at Garsington.



In its 10 years, Garsington has explored the repertoire of Haydn comedies fairly exhaustively—they fit well in the pastoral setting and the standard of performances has confirmed the musical reputation of the festival. It has also introduced two little-known operas by Richard Strauss: *Daphne* in 1995 and last year *Die ägyptische Helena*, in a highly successful, imaginative production. This year it offers Mozart, who has been on the bill every season except one, Rossini, heard in three out of the past four years, and, for the first time, Verdi.

Mozart wrote *Lucio Silla* when he was 17 years old and its music hints at some of the mature works. Its libretto is based on the life of the Roman dictator Sulla and the recent production in London by European Chamber Opera revealed a score worth more frequent hearing than it has so far enjoyed.

Rossini's *La Pietra del Paragone* is a comedy of disguise and intrigue which will be staged by the Italian production team of Stefano Vizioli and Susanna

Rossi Jost, who worked there in 1996 on *Il Turco in Italia*. The cast will include two Italian baritones making their UK debuts: Paolo Rumetz, who has sung in many of Italy's leading opera houses, and Riccardo Novaro, who has performed Verdi and Mozart roles in his own country.

The Englishness of Verdi's final great comic masterpiece, *Falstaff*, makes it peculiarly suited to this opera house set in the Oxfordshire countryside. Robert Poulton makes his debut in the title role, Stephen Unwin directs and Stephen Barlow conducts.

Garsington is most easily reached by car and there are no problems of parking in the adjacent large field. It is also possible to travel by train and hire a taxi at Oxford railway station. See Listings for performance details.

Fidelio. Andrew Greenwood conducts Robert Chevara's fine new production, with Susan Stacey as Leonore, Geraint Dodd as Florestan. *Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry* (01203 524524); May 26-30.

GARSINGTON OPERA

Garsington, Oxford (01865 361636).

La Pietra del Paragone. The cast for this Rossini rarity includes Patricia Bardon, Steven Page, Charles Workman; Charles Peebles conducts. June 8, 13, 19, 23, 26, July 1, 4.

Lucio Silla. Early Mozart directed by Aidan Lang, conducted by Stuart Bedford, with Thomas Randle in the title role. June 9, 14, 20, 24, 28, July 2, 5.

Falstaff. Robert Poulton sings the lead in Garsington's first Verdi opera. June 18, 21, 25, 27, 30, July 3.

GLYNDEBOURNE FESTIVAL OPERA
Glyndebourne, Lewes, E Sussex (01273 813813).

Così fan tutte. New staging directed by Graham Vick, conducted by Andrew Davis, with Barbara Frittoli, Katarina Karnéus, Natale de Carolis & Roberto Sacca as the confused lovers, Daniela Mazzucato as Despina, Alan Opie as Don Alfonso. May 24, 30, June 1, 4, 6, 9, 12, 20, 23, 26, 28, July 2.

Kár'a Kabanová. With Amanda Roocroft as Janáček's tragic heroine in a revival of Nikolaus Lehnhoff's powerfully atmospheric production,

& Helga Dernesch making her debut at Glyndebourne as the Kabanicha. May 26, 29, 31, June 3, 5, 7, 11, 14, 18, 21.

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

Rodelinda. William Christie conducts the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment in this new Handel production by Jean-Marie Villégier; Anna Caterina Antonacci sings the title role, with Andreas Scholl as Bertarido, her husband, Kurt Streit as his rival, Grimoaldo. June 13, 17, 19, 22, 25, 27, 30, July 3, 5, 12, 14, 20, 24.

Eugene Onegin: Alwyn Mellor sings Tchaikovsky's Tatyana for Opera North.



Simon Boccanegra. Mark Elder conducts & Peter Hall directs a new production, with Giancarlo Pasqueto making his UK debut as the Doge of Genoa, Elena Prokina as his long-lost daughter, Amelia. July 4, 8, 11, 19, 23, 25, 28, 31, Aug 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 24.

Capriccio. Dames Kiri te Kanawa & Felicity Lott successively sing the role of the Countess in John Cox's stylish, 1973, production. July 18, 22, 26, 30, Aug 2, 5, 9, 14, 17, 20, 22, 25.

Le Comte Ory. Return of last year's hugely enjoyable burlesque staging by Jérôme Savary, again with Marc Laho as Ory & Annick Massis as Adèle. Aug 1, 3, 6, 8, 12, 15, 18, 21, 23, 26, 28.

OPERA NORTH

Grand Theatre, Leeds (0113 222 6222).

Eugene Onegin. With Peter Savidge as Onegin, Alwyn Mellor as Tatyana, Paul Nilon as Lensky; Steven Sloane conducts. May 28, June 24, 26.

Joan of Arc. Philip Prowse directs & Richard Farnes conducts Verdi's early opera, with Susannah Glanville as Joan, Julian Gavin as Charles VII. May 29, June 23, 25.

The Barber of Seville. Roderick Williams sings the title role, with Ann Taylor as Rosina, Iain Paton as Count Almaviva, in Giles Havergal's production. May 30.

Of Thee I Sing. Concert performance to mark George

Gershwin's centenary. Cast includes Margaret Preece, Kim Criswell, William Dazeley. May 27, June 27. On tour

Joan of Arc, Eugene Onegin, The Barber of Seville, Of Thee I Sing. *Theatre Royal, Norwich* (01603 630000); June 3-6. *Palace, Manchester* (0161-242 2503); June 9-13. *Theatre Royal, Nottingham* (0115-948 2626); June 16-20. *Theatre Royal, Newcastle* (0191-232 2061); June 30-July 4.

SCOTTISH OPERA

Theatre Royal, Glasgow (0141-332 9000).

La traviata. Claire Rutter sings Violetta, with Nikolai Schukoff as Alfredo. Richard Zeller as Germont; Richard Armstrong conducts. May 26, 30, June 2, 4, 6.

The Queen of Spades. Staged by Yannis Kokkos, with Russian tenor Vladimir Kouzmenko & baritone Alexander Poliakovs as Herman & Tomsy, Elmira Magomedova as Lisa; Richard Armstrong conducts. May 28, June 3.

On tour

La traviata, The Queen of Spades. *Empire, Sunderland* (0191-514 2517); June 8, 9. *Edinburgh Festival Theatre*; (0131-529 6000); June 16-20. **La traviata.** *His Majesty's, Aberdeen* (01224 641122). June 12, 13.

WELSH NATIONAL OPERA

New Theatre, Cardiff (01222 878889).

Boris Godunov. Willard White sings the lead in David Pountney's staging, conducted by Carlo Rizzi & designed by Huntly/Muir. With John Daszak as Grigory, Neil Jenkins as Shuisky, Gwynne Howell as Pimen. June 2,5.

La traviata. Irish soprano Cara O'Sullivan sings Violetta, with Gwyn Hughes Jones as Alfredo, Jonathan Summers as Giorgio Germont; Carlo Rizzi conducts. June 3,6.

Tosca. Mary Lloyd Davies sings the title role, with Ian Storey/Dennis O'Neill as Cavaradossi, Robert Hayward as Scarpia. June 4.

On tour

Hippodrome, Bristol (0117-929 9444);

June 9-13. *North Wales Theatre,*

Llandudno (01492 872000); June 16-

20. *Theatre Royal, Plymouth* (01752

267222); June 23-27. *Apollo, Oxford*

(01865 244544); June 30-July 4.

Mayflower, Southampton (01703

711811); July 7-11.

MARGARET DAVIES



ANTHONY CRICKMAY

DANCE

The world of British ballet marks a major event on June 6 when Dame Ninette de Valois celebrates her 100th birthday. The Royal Ballet and the Birmingham Royal Ballet, both of which companies she founded, will revive some of her own ballets in their celebratory programmes. Following their spectacular staging of *Swan Lake* in the round at the Albert Hall last year, English National Ballet presents Prokofiev's *Romeo & Juliet* in the same venue this summer. The Royal Ballet fields its star dancers for its four-week season at the London Coliseum.

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

English National Ballet.

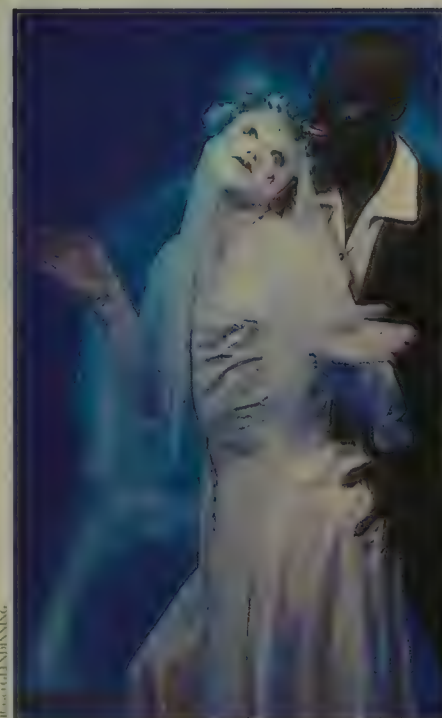
Derek Deane creates the choreography for a new staging of Prokofiev's *Romeo & Juliet*, designed by Roberta Guidi di Bagno, & performed in the round. Italian dancer Roberto Bolle & ENB principal Tamara Rojo dance the leads on the opening night, alternating performances with Greg Horsman & Lisa Pavane. Guest artists Boris de Leeuw from Dutch National Ballet & Lucia Lacarra from San Francisco Ballet will also appear. June 18-30. *Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, SW7* (0171 589 8212).

Romeo & Juliet:

Tamara Rojo & Roberto Bolle dance the lovers for English National Ballet.

Cruel Garden: Bruce's ballet, right, based on Lorca, for Rambert Dance Company.

Royal Ballet. The company celebrates the 100th birthday of Dame Ninette de Valois with a triple bill: *The Rake's Progress*, choreographed by Ninette de Valois in 1935; a series of divertissements made up of excerpts from other de Valois ballets & representative extracts from the work of Kenneth MacMillan & David Bintley; & Ashton's *Birthday Offering*; June 15. For the remainder of the Royal Ballet's first season at the Barbican Centre, during which all the company principals will appear, the divertissements will be replaced by a new Ashley Page ballet; June 16-19, 20(m&c). *Barbican Theatre, Silk St, EC2* (0171-638 8891). The Royal Ballet next moves to the Coliseum with Natalia Makarova's production of the great Minkus ballet *La Bayadère*, featuring Durante, Bussell, Mukhamedov & Kumakawa. July 7-9, 17, 18(m&c). Anthony Dowell's production of *Swan Lake* in Petipa & Ivanov's choreography, with Sylvie Guillem dancing at some performances, July 10, 11(m&c), 13, 14(m&c), 15, 16. MacMillan's *Manon*, with Guillem, Wildor, Durante & Bussell alternating in the title role. July 20, 21(m&c), 22, 23, 31, Aug 1(m&c). Triple bill: *Concerto, Divertissements, Raymonda Act III*, July 24, 25(m&c). Dowell's production of *The Sleeping Beauty*, July 27, 28(m&c), 29, 30. *London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2* (0171-632 8300).



THE GALEENING

Happy centenary, Madam!

Known throughout the British ballet world as "Madam", Ninette de Valois's life parallels the history of ballet in Britain. Born in 1898 in County Wicklow, Ireland, she came to England as a child and started her career as a dancer, spending some time with Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes*.

Back in England in her late 20s, she formulated the ambition to create an English national ballet company. Her first step was the Vic-Wells Ballet, an off-shoot of Lillian Baylis' Old Vic Theatre, which was installed in 1931 in the rebuilt Sadler's Wells Theatre. Two of the young dancers she trained were Robert Helpman and Margot Fonteyn; Frederick Ashton became her resident choreographer.

What was to become the Sadler's Wells Ballet moved to Covent Garden when that theatre reopened in 1946, and the same year a second smaller company was set up, initially as a touring troupe and a training ground for young dancers. Now grown into the Royal Ballet and the Birmingham Royal Ballet, they stand as a permanent tribute to a visionary woman.



Centenarian Dame Ninette de Valois.

ANTHONY CRICKMAY

OUT OF TOWN

Birmingham Royal Ballet. Triple bill presented as a tribute to Ninette de Valois on her 100th birthday: Ashton's *Symphonic Variations*, de Valois's own comedy *The Prospect Before Us*, Bintley's new ballet, *The Protecting Veil*, dedicated to Dame Ninette. June 3-5, 6(m&c). *Hippodrome, Birmingham* (0121-622 7486).

Nederlands Dans Theater II. The 14 young dancers from across the globe in an eclectic programme of ballets by Kylian, Lightfoot, Inger & Delacroix. June 11-13. *Festival Theatre, Edinburgh* (0131-529 6000).

Northern Ballet Theatre. The *Hunchback of Notre Dame*, directed by Christopher Gable & choreographed by Michael Pink. Amaya Iglesias dances Esmeralda, with Luc Jacobs as

Quasimodo. *Theatre Royal, Newcastle* (0191-232 2061); June 9-13. *Theatre Royal, Glasgow* (0141-332 9000); June 16-20. Gable's modern version of *Giselle*, designed by Lez Brotherston, set in an impoverished community living under martial law. *Her Majesty's, Aberdeen* (01224 641122); June 23-27. *Grand Theatre, Leeds* (0113-222 6222); June 30-July 4.

Rambert Dance Company. Triple bill: Kylian's *No More Play*, Merce Cunningham's *August Pace*, Didi Veldman's *Greymatter*, May 27, 28; revival of Christopher Bruce's full-length ballet *Cruel Garden*, based on a work by Federico Garcia Lorca, which he created with Lindsay Kemp in 1977, May 29, 30. *Festival Theatre, Edinburgh* (0131-529 6000). *Cruel Garden*, June 9-11; Triple bill: *Gaps, Lapse & Relapse; No More Play; Axioma 7*, June 12, 13 (m&c). *Deragate, Northampton* (01604 624 811). *Cruel Garden*, June 18-20; *Theatre Royal, Norwich* (01603 630000).

Scottish Ballet. New triple bill: Adam Cooper's *Just Scratchin' the Surface*, danced to classic jazz & designed by Lez Brotherston, Sheridan Nicol's *Faerie Feat*, featuring jazz-based choreography and music by Scottish folk band The Peat Bog Faeries, & Peter Darrell's *Five Rückert Songs*, set to Mahler's music, which will be sung by mezzo-soprano Ruby Philogene. *Citizens' Theatre, Glasgow* (0141-429 0022); June 4-6. *Lyceum, Edinburgh* (0131-229 9697); June 8-10.

MARGARET DAVIES

MUSIC

The Proms, opening at the Albert Hall in July, explore the triple themes of musical magic & mystery, power & politics, adventures & anniversaries. At the Barbican, Previn conducts the LSO, and Litton the Bournemouth Symphony, in American music. Colin Davis conducts Bizet's *Carmen* in concert. At the South Bank, Richard Bonyngne conducts Donizetti's *Caterina Cornaro*. St John's presents an innovative *Liederreise*, the Wigmore Hall some outstanding vocal recitals.

ALBERT HALL. *Kensington Gore, W8* (0171-589 8212). **Henry Wood Promenade Concerts.** Nightly July 17-Sept 12, 7.30pm, unless otherwise stated. **BBC Symphony Orchestra, Chorus & Singers.** Andrew Davis conducts Berlioz' *The Damnation of Faust*, July 17.

Les Arts Florissants. William Christie conducts Rameau's *Zoroastre*, with Jean-Paul Fouchécourt in the title role, July 18, 7pm.

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Chorus & Youth Chorus. Simon Rattle conducts Szymanowski's *King Roger*, with Thomas Hampson in the title role, July 19.

Fretwork, the Bauhaus Band. John Harle conducts the London

première of his opera *Angel Magick*, directed by David Pountney, July 21, 10pm.

Orchestre Revolutionnaire et Romantique, Monteverdi Choir. John Eliot Gardiner conducts Verdi's *Falstaff*, directed by Ian Judge, with Jean-Philippe Lafont in the lead, July 25.

Gabrieli Consort & Players. Paul McCreesh conducts Handel's *Solomon*, July 27, 7pm.

BBC National Orchestra & Chorus of Wales, Philharmonia Chorus. Mark Wigglesworth conducts the world première of Gerard McBurney's *Letter to Paradise*, Ravel's *Daphnis & Chloe*, July 28. **BBC Concert Orchestra & Singers, Bournemouth Symphony Chorus.** Wayne Marshall conducts Gershwin's *Porgy & Bess*, with Willard White. Cynthia Haymon & Cynthia Clarey. Aug 1, 6.30pm.



Ulster Orchestra. Dmitry Sitkovsky conducts the world première of Rodion Shchedrin's Four Russian Songs for Symphony Orchestra, Berlioz' *Les Nuits d'été*, Tchaikovsky's Symphony No 4, Aug 7.

National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. Mstislav Rostropovich conducts the world première of Michael Berkeley's *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, Britten's Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Shostakovich's Symphony No 10, Aug 8.

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. Heinrich Schiff conducts Haydn's Symphony No 70, arias by Haydn & Gluck, with Thomas Allen, Beethoven's Symphony No 3, Aug 12.

Choral Day. Massed choirs including the Joyful Company of Singers, Ex Cathedral, Choir of New College, Oxford, Huddersfield Choral Society celebrate the British choral tradition, culminating with Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Aug 15, 2.30pm.

St Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra. Gennady Rozhdestvensky conducts Tchaikovsky's *Romeo & Juliet*, Prokofiev's Violin Concerto, with Alexander Rozhdestvensky, Stravinsky's *Petrushka* (1947), Aug 24; Yuri Temirkanov conducts Rimsky-Korsakov's suite *The Golden Cockerel*, Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No 2, with Evgeny Kissin, Mussorgsky/ Ravel *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Aug 25.

Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. Esa-Pekka Salonen conducts Copland's *El Salon Mexico*, the UK première of his own *La Variations*, Stravinsky's *The Firebird*, Aug 31, 8pm.

PALACE THEATRE. *Silk St. EC2* (0171-638 8891).

Richard Goode, piano, Bach, Beethoven, Schumann, Debussy, May 27, 7.30pm.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Robert Bachmann conducts

Esa-Pekka Salonen: Conducts the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Proms.

Mendelssohn's Overture *The Hebrides*. Bruch's Violin Concerto No 1, with Tasmin Little, Bruckner's Symphony No 5, May 29, 7.30pm.

London Symphony Orchestra. André Previn conducts Copland's *Appalachian Spring*, two of his own vocal pieces *Honey & Rue* & *Vocalise*, with Harolyn Blackwell, soprano, William Schuman's Symphony No 3, May 31; Copland's *Quiet City* & Clarinet Concerto, Barber's Violin Concerto, with Gil Shaham, Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, June 7; 7.30pm.

Dawn Upshaw, soprano, **Richard Goode,** piano. Schumann, Debussy, Harbison, Strauss, Schubert: songs & piano works, June 3, 7.30pm.

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra & Chorus. Andrew Litton conducts Bernstein/Foss Prelude, Fugue & Riffs, MacDowell's Piano Concerto No 2, with Andrew Watts, Gershwin/Litton *Porgy & Bess* Suite, June 5, 7.30pm.

Richard Stoltzman, clarinet. **Lucas Foss,** piano. Gershwin, Copland, Ives, Reich, Foss, Hindemith, Bernstein, June 6, 7.30pm.

Vienna Concentus Musicus. Nikolaus Harnoncourt conducts Mozart's Symphonies Nos 25 & 41, Handel & Mozart arias sung by Sylvia McNair, June 10, 7.30pm.

London Soloists Chamber Orchestra. David Josefowitz conducts Leopold Mozart's Trumpet Concerto, Mozart's Concerto for Two Pianos, Beethoven's Triple Concerto & Symphony No 8, June 15, 7.30pm.

London Symphony Orchestra. John Williams conducts his own music for the cinema & for the concert hall, July 1, 2, 3, 4, 7.30pm. **Ravi Shankar,** sitar. **Anoushka**



Nederlands Dans Theater II: Catch this dynamic young group in Edinburgh.

Shankar, sitar. The "Godfather of World Music" is joined by his daughter for a recital. July 9, 7.30pm.
London Symphony Orchestra. Colin Davis conducts a concert performance of Bizet's *Carmen*, with Olga Borodina in the lead, José Cura as Don José. July 12, 15, 17, 7.30pm.

South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242).

Kronos Festival. The Kronos Quartet celebrates its 25th anniversary & the creation of nearly 1,000 works premiered since 1973: *Trains*, work by Seve Reich & Harry Partch, May 27, 8pm; *Konos* for Children, May 30, 2.30pm; *The Rite of Spring*, May 30, 8pm.

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Seiji Ozawa conducts Brahms' Symphony No 1, Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. May 28, 7.30pm.

Bach Choir, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. David Hill conducts the London première of Robert Walker's *De Profundis*, Elgar's

Dream of Gerontius. June 2, 7.30pm.
Philharmonia Orchestra. Valery Gergiev conducts Mussorgsky/Ravel *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. June 7, 7.30pm.

Krystian Zimerman, piano. Beethoven, Chopin. June 8, 7.30pm.
Murray Perahia, piano. Bach, Beethoven, Schubert. June 24, 7.30pm.

Philharmonia Orchestra. Christian Thielemann conducts Wagner's Overture *Rienzi* & *Wesendonk Lieder*, with Anne Sofie von Otter, Beethoven's Symphony No 5, June 25; Schumann's Overture *Genoveva*. Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 3, with Alfred Brendel, & Symphony No 7, June 28; 7.30pm.

South Bank Centre.

Roger Woodward, piano, Chopin, James Dillon, Debussy. June 1, 7.45pm.
Borodin String Quartet. Beethoven, Shostakovich. June 2, 7.45pm.
Pascal Rogé, piano. Debussy, Satie. June 4, 7.45pm.

Chelsea Opera Group Chorus & Orchestra. Howard Williams conducts Massenet's *Esclarmonde*, with Harriet Williams & Justin Lavender. June 7, 7.15pm.

Andrew Wilde, piano. Haydn, Chopin, Schumann, Prokofiev. June 17, 7.45pm.

London Concert Choir, City of London Sinfonia. Mark Forkgen conducts Haydn's oratorio *The Creation*. June 18, 7.45pm.

John Peel's Meltdown. Radio 1's DJ selects his current faves & for two weeks they're off the turntable & into the South Bank halls. Warp Records Showcase, June 20. Chemikal Underground Records Showcase, June 21. Cornershop & Gorky's Zygotie Mynce, June 30. Spiritualized, July 1. Ivor Cutler, July 2.

London Choral Society, New London Orchestra. Ronald Corp conducts Bach's Cantata No 50, Bruch's Violin Concerto No 1, with MinJin Kim, Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*. June 23, 7.30pm.

Feinstein Ensemble of London. Martin Feinstein directs Concertos by Vivaldi. June 26; 7.45pm.

Richard Bonyng conducts Donizetti's opera *Caterina Cornaro*, in a semi-staged performance, with Greek soprano Jenny Drivala. June 28, 7pm.

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

STATION

Smith Sq, SW1 (0171-222 1061).

Liederreise. A journey through the world of Lieder, each recital repeating the final section of the previous one. Robin Tyson, counter-tenor, June 9; Janis Kelly, soprano, Peter Evans, tenor, June 16; Ruby Philogene, mezzo-soprano, Stuart MacIntyre, baritone, June 18; Lorna Anderson, soprano, Timothy Robinson, tenor, June 22; Lisa Milne, soprano, Karl Daymond, tenor, June 26; Linda Kitchen, soprano, Louise Winter, mezzo-soprano, July 8; Carol Smith, soprano, Jamie MacDougall, tenor, July 9; 7pm.

STATION

Trafalgar Sq, WC2 (0171-839 8362).

London Soloists Chamber Orchestra. David Josefowitz conducts three Mozart & Beethoven programmes. June 5, 26, July 4, 7.30pm.

WIGMORE HALL

36 Wigmore St, W1 (0171-935 2141).

Midori, violin, **Robert McDonald**, piano. Beethoven, Fauré, Brahms, Szymanowski. May 29, 7.30pm.

Olaf Bar, baritone, **Malcolm Martineau**, piano. Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Pfitzner, Mahler. May 30, 7.30pm.

King's Singers, Evelyn Glennie, percussion. Martland, Klatzow, Gordon, etc. June 2, 7.30pm.

Sergei Leiferkus, baritone, **Semion Skigin**, piano. Russian songs from the repertoire of Feodor Chaliapin. June 3, 7.30pm.

Barbara Bonney, soprano, **Malcolm Martineau**, piano. Brahms, Previn, Schoenberg, Mahler. June 6, 7.30pm.

Catherine Malfitano, soprano, **Robert Tweten**, piano. Arias by Weill, Songs by Satie, Bolcom, Poulenc, Gershwin. June 8, 7.30pm.

Aaron Rosand, violin, **Hugh Sung**, piano. Beethoven, Bach, Brahms. June 10 & 13, 7.30pm.

Natalie Clein, cello, **Itamar Golan**, piano. Schumann, Shostakovich, Rakhmaninov. June 18, 7.30pm.

Simon Keenlyside, baritone, **Malcolm Martineau**, piano. Debussy, Strauss, Glazunov, Mahler, Rakhmaninov. June 20, 7.30pm.

Ysaye Quartet, Pascal Rogé, piano. Beethoven, Fauré, Dvorák. June 27, 7.30pm.

Rosa Mannion, soprano, **Julius Drake**, piano. Debussy, Ravel, Strauss, Hahn. July 10, 7.30pm.

Trio Wanderer. Schubert & Tchaikovsky Piano Trios. July 11, 7.30pm.

Chilingirian Quartet, Yuko Inoue, viola, **Stephen Orton**, cello. Shostakovich, Beethoven, Brahms. July 14, 7.30pm.

MARGARET DAVIES



Olga Borodina: Sings *Carmen* at the Barbican with the LSO.
Borodin String Quartet: In recital at the Elizabeth Hall.
John Peel: In-charge of this summer's Meltdown at the South Bank.



Adzido Pan African Dance:

See their colourful show in Salisbury.

Covent Garden Festival:

Opera erupts in unexpected places all over this historic district of London.

Yggdrasil Quartet:

One of the chamber groups, bottom, taking part in the Mozart cycle at the City of London Festival.

FESTIVALS

Bow Bells ring to launch more than 100 events at the City of London festival; in Covent Garden you can catch *Trial by Jury* at Bow Street magistrates court and ambulant opera in a Mini motor car. The stars will be out at Hampton Court; Holland Park will resound to open-air opera; early music will enchant the ear in St James's, Piccadilly, & at St John's, Smith Square.

City of London Festival. The opening concert will be a candlelit performance of Rachmaninov's Vespers in St Paul's Cathdal. Highlights of more than 100 events in 35 venues in the Square Mile include the world première of John Tavener's *Eternity's Sunrise*; the Maly Theatre of St Petersburg in Dostoevsky's *The Possessed*; Bedlam Dance Company, one of Britain's most original troupes; the complete Brandenburg Concertos; recitals by violinist Frank Peter Zimmermann, organist Jennifer Bate, percussionist Evelyn Glennie & baritone Christopher Maltman. A Mozart string quartet and quintet cycle runs nightly at 6.15pm in livery halls & churches; 18 lunchtime events feature artists from around the world. June 23-July 16. Box office: Barbican Centre, EC2 (0171-638 8891).

BOC Covent Garden Festival. A chance to explore this historic area of London and discover some unusual venues. The Sixteen gives Handel's oratorio *Samson* in the Grand Temple of Freemasons' Hall. Music Theatre London takes a fresh look at Strauss' operetta *Die Fledermaus* at the Unicorn Arts Theatre. Muziektheater Transparant performs the Weill/

Brecht Mahagonny *Songspiel & Happy End*; David Horne's *Travellers* & Tim Benjamin's *The Bridge*, winners of the Stephen Oliver opera prize, will be premièred; both at the Cochrane Theatre. After five years of sell-outs, *Trial by Jury* returns to Bow Street Magistrates' Court. New this year: Mini Opera will be zooming around the market area bringing opera to the most unexpected places from a Mini motor car. Until June 6. Box office: 67 Long Acre, WC2 (0171-312 1992).

Hampton Court Palace Festival. Welsh baritone Bryn Terfel sings operatic arias & songs from the shows. Opera North gives Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* in concert. The tenor José Carreras performs some of his favourite arias & songs with the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House. Also appearing: violinist Nigel Kennedy, singers Lesley Garrett & Elaine Page, flamenco master Paco Peña. Explore the palace or picnic in the grounds during the long interval. June 11-20. Box office: PO Box 43, London WC2H 7LD (0171-344 4444).

Holland Park Opera. An attractive programme opens with the "terrible twins" *Cavalleria Rusticana* & *Pagliacci*, June 16-27. There is a second chance to catch *Iris* by Pietro Mascagni, last year's great hit, June 30-July 4. Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*, sung in English, July 15-18. Cilea's *L'Arlesiana* receives its first major production in Britain, Aug 4-8. Donizetti & Verdi are also on the bill. Until Aug 22. Box office: Holland Park Theatre, W8 (0171-602 7856).

Lufthansa Festival of Baroque Music. The Golden Age of French Music theme includes performances of Rameau's *Pygmalion*, music for the Mass by Charpentier & Lalande, cantatas & dramatic works by Lully & Montéclair. There will be three concerts at St James's Piccadilly:

Christophe Rousset & Les Talens Lyriques sing French baroque vocal music; Birmingham's Ex Cathedra Chamber Choir & Orchestra perform Charpentier & Lalande; St James's Baroque Players gives Handel's oratorio *Athalie*. Other events take place at St John's, Smith Square. The English Concert plays dance music by Rameau, Purcell & Handel. The Bottom Line, from Italy, makes its British debut with viol music by Forqueray & Marais. Ivor Bolton conducts Purcell's *Dido & Aeneas*, with Katarina Karnéus. Gerard Lesne & his ensemble Il Seminario Musicale give Couperin's *Leçons de Ténèbres*. June 1-29. Box office: St John's Smith Sq, SW1 (0171-222 1061).

Spitalfields Festival. Hear a concert in Hawksmoor's historic Christ Church & visit this lively multi-cultural district. The programme features Sephardic melodies from Spain, gamelan music from Indonesia, madrigals from England. New works are programmed with masterpieces: Matthew King with Bach's Easter Oratorio, Giles Swayne with Tallis' 40-part Motet, Arvo Pärt





I Masnadieri:
Paul Brown's
designs for the Royal
Opera's production
at Edinburgh.
Noh Theatre:
International events
at the City of London
Festival.

**Cheltenham
International
Festival.** Opens
with Music Theatre
Wales' production
of *Punch & Judy*
by Harrison
Birtwistle, who
with Elliott
Carter, Gyorgy
Ligeti & George
Benjamin also
has new works
performed. A

with Byrd's music for viol consort. A new ensemble, Vaganza, gives a programme of contemporary music. Monica Huggett performs Bach's solo violin works in three recitals; counter-tenor James Bowman gives a recital with Canzona; I Fagiolini perform English madrigals; the choir of Winchester Cathedral sings Fauré &

**A Midsummer
Night's Dream:**
Balanchine's ballet comes to
Edinburgh.

Debussy; Combattimento give Rossini's *Petite messe Solennelle*. Walks & talks explore the history of Spitalfields. June 3-24. *Box office:* Christ Church, Commercial St, E1 6LY (0171-377 1362).

**OUT OF TOWN
Aldeburgh Festival of Music &
Arts.** The programme opens with Britten's opera *A Midsummer Night's Dream* & includes the premiere of *Hey Persephone!* composed by Deirdre Gribben. American composer Peter Lieberson is featured & there will

be tributes to Michael Tippett & recitals by soprano Dawn Upshaw, pianist Ilya Itin, viola player Tabea Zimmermann & cellist Steven Isserlis. Four of this country's leading singers, Felicity Lott, Ann Murray, Philip Langridge & Thomas Allen, take part in a song gala. Ian Bostridge lectures on Schubert; Stuart Bedford gives a musical introduction to his grandmother, Liza Lehmann, June 10-28. *Box office:* Aldeburgh Festival, High St, Aldeburgh, Suffolk IP15 5AX (01728 453543).

Buxton Festival. This jewel in the Peak District offers Mozart's *La Finta Semplice* & Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* in Matcham's Opera House. Artist in residence Thomas Allen can be heard in recital with Roger Vignoles, talking with Lord Harewood, in masterclasses with young singers & performing Walton's *Façade*. Festival masses & jazz, July 16-26. *Box office:* Buxton Festival, 1 Crescent View, Hall Bank, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 6EN (01298 72190).

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

Edinburgh International Festival. With the closure of Covent Garden, the Royal Opera transfers its Verdi festival to Scotland with performances of four operas based on plays by Schiller, one of which, *The Robbers* will be staged by the Glasgow Citizens Theatre. The drama programme also features Calderón, O'Neill, Camus & Racine. Dance celebrates the work of the choreographer Hans van Manen. Plus a rich palette of international orchestras & soloists. Aug 16-Sept 5. *Box office:* Edinburgh International Festival, 21 Market St, Edinburgh EH1 1BW (0131 473 2000).

major highlight will be Alfred Brendel's complete Beethoven Piano Concerto cycle with the Sinfonia Varsovia. Others taking part are the London Sinfonietta, Lindsay Quartet, Endymion Ensemble & pianists Joanna MacGregor & Piotr Anderszewski. July 4-19. *Box office:* Town Hall, Imperial Square, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 1QA (01242 227979).
Salisbury Festival. An eclectic mix includes Obelisk Dance Company, a Polish street show *Carmen Funèbre*, Haitian band Boukman Eksperyans, Jacqui Dankworth & her band Field of Blue, & Adzido Pan African Dance Ensemble. Plus the RSC in *The Herbal Bed*, the Philharmonia Orchestra in concert, & *Oh, What a Lovely War* in the National Theatre's big top. Until June 13. *Box office:* Salisbury Playhouse, Malthouse Lane, Salisbury SP2 7RA (01722 320333).

MARGARET DAVIES

EXHIBITIONS

A bright summer lies ahead, with Andy Warhol's style celebrated at the Barbican, Patrick Heron's works at the Tate, Maori culture at the British Museum, & both Chagall & the popular Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy. Lewis Carroll is the subject of two tributes: the centenary of his death is commemorated at Bethnal Green & at the NPG.

RANKSIDE GALLERY

48 Hopton St, SE1 (0171-928 7521).

Royal Scottish Water Colour Society. First London showing for the cream of Scotland's watercolourists. June 18-July 12. Tues 10am-8pm; Wed-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat, Sun 1-5pm. £3.50, concessions £2.



★ HIGHLIGHT ★

BARBICAN ART GALLERY

Barbican Centre, Silk St, EC2
(0171-382 7105).**The Warhol Look:****Glamour, Style, Fashion.**

Costumes, photographs, period magazines, illustrations, film & videos from the 1940s to 80s show the seriousness of Andy Warhol's approach to the "material culture" of his time. May 28-Aug 16. Mon-Sat 10am-6.45pm (Tues until 5.45pm; Wed until 7.45pm), Sun noon-6.45pm. £5, concessions (& everybody Mon-Fri after 5pm) £3.

BETHNAL GREEN MUSEUM OF
CHILDHOODCambridge Heath Rd, E2 (0181-980
2415).**Alice: The Wonderland of Lewis**

Carroll. As well as Tenniel's familiar engravings, visitors will find Alice illustrations by Rackham, Peake, Steadman, Peter Blake & Mabel Lucie Attwell, plus photographs & sketches by Carroll himself. Toys, board & card games, hands-on models of the Cheshire Cat, the Jabberwock & the hookah-smoking

Henri Matisse: The
unmistakeable marks of the
man captured in a retrospective
at Alan Cristea Gallery.

caterpillar on show, plus weekend activities for children. Until June 25. Mon-Thurs & Sat 10am-5.50pm, Sun 2.30-5.50pm.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Great Russell St, WC1 (0171-636 1555).

Maori. The culture, history & arts of the Maori people of New Zealand, from weapons to ornaments & including contemporary objects specially commissioned for the exhibition. June 27-Nov 1. £4, concessions £2.

The Print in Stuart Britain.

Political caricature, natural history, landscape & other prints from the 17th century, showing the development of this art-form at which the British have always excelled. Until Sept 20.

Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 2.30-6pm.

CONTEMPORARY APPLIED ARTS

2 Percy St, W1 (0171-436 2344).

Fifty Pieces of Gold.

Contemporary jewellery by Gerda Flockinger, Jacqueline Mina, Breon O'Casey, Wendy Ramshaw & David Watkins. Until June 20. Mon-Sat 10.30am-5.30pm. Closed May 25.

ALAN CRISTEA GALLERY

31 Cork St, W1 (0171-439 1866).

Henri Matisse: A Print**Retrospective 1900-52.**

A selection of the artist's best etchings, lithographs, linocuts & aquatints, plus examples of his *Livres Illustrés*. June 24-Aug 1. Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm.

DULWICH PICTURE GALLERY

College Rd, SE21 (0181-693 5254).

Paula Rego. Paintings &

preparatory drawings, based on 19th-century Portuguese literature, related to works from the gallery's permanent collection. June 17-July 19. Tues-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 11am-5pm; Sun 2-5pm. £3. OAPs & students £1.50, children (& everybody all day Fri) free.

HAYWARD GALLERY

South Bank, SE1 (0171-928 3144).

Anish Kapoor. Pieces by the internationally acclaimed British artist, including massive stone sculptures & "void" works, which appear to penetrate floors & walls. Until June 14. £5, concessions £3.50.

Bruce Nauman. The focus of the show is on this avant-garde American artist's relationship with language, as shown in video & other installations. July 16-Sept 6. £5, concessions £3.50.

Daily 10am-6pm (Tues, Wed until 8pm).

KENWOOD HOUSE

Iveagh Bequest, Hampstead Lane, NW3
(0181-348 1286).**Angels & Urchins: The Fancy****Picture in 18th-century British**

Art. Children & prostitutes, beggars & do-gooding aristocrats are among the subjects of sentimentalised portraits, full of allegory & erotic innuendo, by Gainsborough, Reynolds, Hogarth & other famous British artists. Until Aug 9. Daily 10am-6pm. £3.50, concessions £2.50, children free.

LUMLEY GALLERY

33 Davies St, W1 (0171-439 2822).



The show must go on:
The RA features theatre murals
created by Marc Chagall
during World War I in Russia.

Matisse: Paintings & Drawings.

A bird's eye view of the artist's achievements from the early part of his career to nearly the end, showing typical examples of his stylistic development over the years, with drawings ranging from 1909 to the 1940s. June 23-July 24. Mon-Fri 10am-6pm.

MILFORD GALLERY

17 Carlton House Terrace, SW1
(0171-930 6844).**Society of Wildlife Artists.**

Annual exhibition of works in a variety of media, by accomplished nature-lovers. July 23-Aug 7. Daily 10am-5pm. £2, concessions £1.

NATIONAL GALLERY

Trafalgar Sq, WC2 (0171-747 2885).

Sainsbury Wing:

Masters of Light: Dutch Painting

from Utrecht in the Golden Age. Some 75 paintings from North American & European collections focus on the rich range of work emanating from Utrecht between the early 1600s & the 1670s. Until Aug 2. £5, concessions £3. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm (Wed until 8pm); Sun noon-6pm.

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM

Greenwich, SE10 (0181-858 4422).

Queen's House:

Peter the Great in England, 1698.

Reminders of a four-month visit to England by the Tsar, who was eager to study shipbuilding, astronomy, mathematics & navigation, are paintings, model ships, a pair of regal gloves—and a bill from Christopher Wren for repairs to the house that was virtually trashed by the Russian monarch & his entourage. Until Sept



Origin of weirdies:
The Natural History
Museum sheds some light
on mythical monsters.

Liz, 1965: *The material*
girl of her day. One of the
many cult images that make
up The Warhol Look at the
Barbican.

27. Daily 10am-5pm. £5, concessions £4, children £2.50 (admits also to other Greenwich attractions).

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

St Martin's Pl, WC2 (0171-306 0055).

Carroll: Through the Viewfinder. Coinciding with the centenary of his death is an exhibition of photographs by the Victorian writer, including portraits of worthy contemporaries & the celebrated picture of Alice Liddell dressed as a beggar-girl. July 10-Oct 11. Mon-Fri 10am-6pm; Sun noon-6pm.

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Cromwell Rd, SW7 (0171-938 9123).

Myths & Monsters. A look at fossil evidence that might explain the realities of such creatures as the unicorn, chimera, Cyclops & Loch Ness monster. Until Sept 13.

New Earth Galleries. Four new exhibitions examine minerals & gems, the story of the Earth's beginnings, the way scientists find new resources, & the diversity of Britain's native geology. Open June 20.

Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm; Sun

11am-5.50pm. £6, OAPs & concessions £3.20, children £3.

PURVES & PURVES

80-81 Tottenham Court Rd, W1

(0171-580 8223).

An Englishman at Home.

Contemporary furniture, lighting & household accessories by top designers, every item manufactured in Britain. May 28-June 20. Mon-Sat 9.30am-6pm (Thurs until 7.30pm).

THE QUEEN'S GALLERY

Buckingham Palace Rd, SW1

(0171-839 1377).

The Quest for Albion. Pictures by Holbein, Van Dyck, Hogarth, Reynolds, Stubbs, Leighton & other artists show how British painters have been encouraged by royal support over the centuries. Until Oct 11. Daily 9.30am-4.30pm. £3.50, OAPs £2.50, children £2.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS

Piccadilly, W1 (0171-300 8000).

The Art of Holy Russia. Icons from Moscow, dating from 1400 to 1660, chart the development of Russian painting during a period when the Kremlin was the city's religious & political centre & many of the artists & architects working there were Italian. Until June 14. Daily 10am-6pm. £5.50, concessions £4.50, students £3.80, children £2.50 & £1.

Summer Exhibition 1998. The regular, controversy-inciting summer fixture, with more than 1,000 works by artists—famous & unknown—selected from an open submission. June 2-Aug 16. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 10am-8.30pm. £7, concessions £5.50, students £5, children £2.50 & £1.

Chagall: Love & the Stage. Some 70 works, the majority not previously exhibited in Britain, focused on the

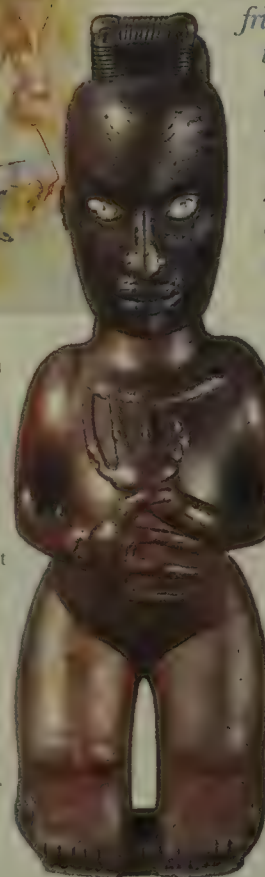
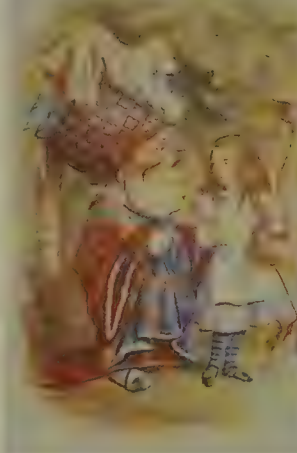


**I HAVE WORKED HARD
TO IMPROVE ENGLISH FOOTBALL.
NOW IT MUST BE DESTROYED.**



Ooh, aah, Cantona!
One of many potent images in the V&A's poster exhibition.

Alice and the Duchess and friends pay tribute to Lewis Carroll at Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood. Maori culture past and present at the British Museum.



eight years Chagall spent in Russia during World War I & the October Revolution.

The centrepiece will be the murals he created for the auditorium of the Moscow State Yiddish Theatre. Also costume & set designs. July 2-Oct 4. Daily 10am-6pm; July/Aug Sun & Sept/Oct Fri until 8.30pm. £6, concessions £5, students £4, children £3 & £1.

ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN Kew, Surrey (0181-332 5618).

Plants for People. A new permanent exhibition marks the reopening of Kew's museum, which closed for structural repairs in 1988. Among unusual items on view—all made from plants—are rubber dentures, a shirt made from pineapple fibre, & a newspaper printed on beaten bark. Opens May 27. Daily 9.30am-5.30pm (from Sept 7, until 4.45pm). £5, OAPs £3.50, children £2.50 (includes admission to gardens).

LATE GALLERY

Millbank, SW1 (0171-887 8008).

Patrick Heron. Eighty colourful works—some being shown for the first time—by one of the leading figures in 20th-century British art.

Subjects range from still-lives, from early days in St Ives, to dazzling, luminous works resulting from recent visits to Australia. June 25-Sept 6. Daily 10am-5.50pm. £5, concessions £3.25.

VICTORIA &

ALBERT MUSEUM

Cromwell Rd, SW7

(0171-938 8349).

The Power of the Poster. The special qualities that have enabled posters to survive as an art-form, illustrated by classic examples from the 1880s to the present day. Until July 26.

Photography: an independent art. The first exhibition in the new Canon Photography Gallery is an overview of the V&A's vast photographic collection ranging from an 1839 daguerrotype to fashion shots for the latest Prada campaign. May 21-Nov. Mon noon-5.50pm; Tues-Sun 10am-5.50pm. £5, concessions £3, students & everybody from 4.30-5.45pm free. ANGELA BIRD

SPORT

In a calendar crammed with cricket, croquet & lawn tennis, the fiercest passions are likely to be aroused by the football World Cup—in which England start on the French pitches as favourites alongside Germany, Brazil & the Czech Republic. Back on this side of the Channel the UK's Chris Boardman will be out to show home cycling fans what he can do during the new Prutour round-Britain race.

ATHLETICS

AAA Championships, European & Commonwealth Trials. A curtain-raiser for Budapest in August & Kuala Lumpur in September.

Jonathan Edwards & Ashia Hanson carry British hopes in men's & women's triple jump, respectively.

July 24-26. *Alexander Stadium, Birmingham* (0121-356 8008).

IAAF Grand Prix. Aug 2. *Don Valley Stadium, Sheffield, S Yorks* (0114-256 0607).

European Championships. Aug 18-23. *Budapest, Hungary* (0121-440 5000).

CRICKET

Cornhill Insurance Test series:

England v South Africa. First Test, June 4-8, *Edgbaston, Birmingham*; **Second Test,** June 18-22, *Lord's, NW8*; **Third Test,** July 2-6, *Old Trafford, Manchester*; **Fourth Test,** July 23-27, *Trent Bridge, Nottingham*; **Fifth Test,** Aug 6-10, *Headingley, Leeds, W Yorks*; (0990 338833).

Benson & Hedges Cup final. July 11. *Lord's* (0171-289 8979).

Cornhill Insurance Test series: England v Sri Lanka. First Test, Aug 27-31. *Foster's Oval, SE11* (0990 338833).

CROQUET

Open Championships. Stephen Mulliner will be hoping to peg out on top again in this quintessentially English pursuit. July 12-19. *Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, SW6* (0171-736 3148).

CYCLING

Prudential Tour of Britain. The



900-mile Prutour takes cyclists through Newcastle, York, Nottingham, Birmingham, Bristol, Rochester & many other cities before arriving in front of the Prudential's Gothic-style headquarters in Holborn. May 23-31. *Starts Stirling; finishes London WC1 (0161-230 2301).*

Tour de France. July 11-Aug 2. *Starts Dublin, Ireland; finishes Paris, France (0161-230 2301).*

EQUESTRIANISM

A mixture of classes to suit all tastes at the Royal International; showjumping fans will flock to the Hickstead events, while those who prefer to watch jumping blended with cross-country & dressage will head for Gatcombe Park.

Royal International Horse Show (including Nations' Cup). July 8-12. *Hickstead, nr Haywards Heath, W Sussex (01273 834315).*

British Open Horse Trials Championships. Aug 14-16. *Gatcombe Park, nr Minchinhampton, Glos (01937 541811).*

British Jumping Derby. Aug 20-23. *Hickstead.*

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

FOOTBALL

World Cup. An exhilarating month of play is promised in 10 French cities. June 10-July 12. *Various venues, France (00 33 1 44 14 19 98).*

GOLF

127th Open Championship.

America's Justin Leonard will be trying to hold off Colin Montgomerie, Nick Faldo & the rest. July 16-19. *Royal Birkdale GC, nr Liverpool (01704 567920).*

Weetabix Women's British Open Championship. Laura Davies & Alison Nicholas will be Britain's favourites to beat Karrie Webb of the US. Aug 13-16. *Royal Lytham & St Anne's GC, nr Blackpool, Lancs (01253 724206).*

HORSE RACING

Their picturesque Downs settings make the Epsom & Goodwood meetings perennial summer favourites. At Ascot, however beautiful the horses, it is hats & hemlines that grab the headlines.

Vodafone Oaks. June 5. *Epsom, Surrey (01372 470047).*

Vodafone Derby. June 6. *Epsom.*
Royal Ascot. June 16-19. *Ascot, Berks (01344 876456).*

King George VI & Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes. July 25. *Ascot.*

"Glorious Goodwood". July 28-Aug 1. *Goodwood, nr Chichester, W Sussex (01243 774107).*

MOTOR RACING

Le Mans 24-hour-Race. June 6, 7. *Le Mans, France (00 33 2 43 40 24 24).*

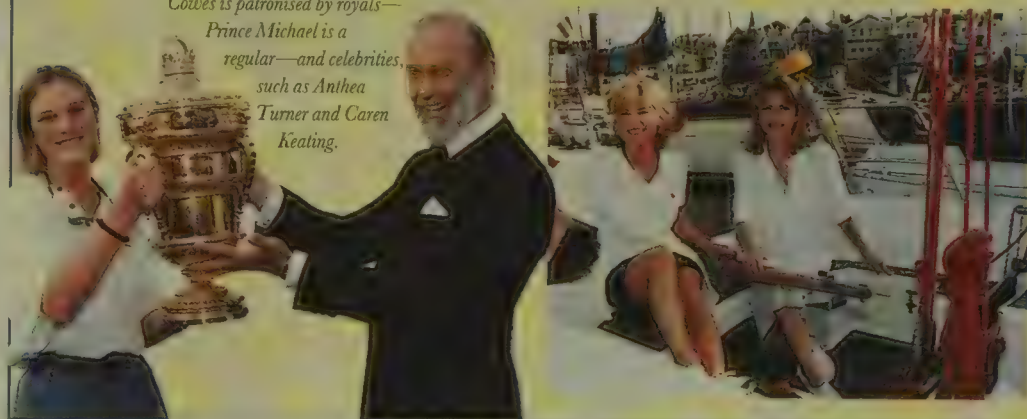
British Grand Prix. Damon Hill, David Coulthard & Eddie Irvine will

Cowes rules the waves

Always held in the first week of August, Cowes Week is the world's biggest and most spectacular regatta. The races, up to 30 every day, start on a line running out from the castle at the mouth of Cowes harbour, Isle of Wight, which is home to the Royal Yacht Squadron, the world's most prestigious yacht club.

Cowes Regatta involves a huge variety of craft, from Maxi yachts over 70 feet long, to the tubby wooden X boats, some over 100 years old. In between, One Design

Cowes is patronised by royals—Prince Michael is a regular—and celebrities, such as Anthea Turner and Caren Keating.



be the focus of British hopes to beat last year's winner, Jacques Villeneuve. July 12. *Silverstone, nr Towcester, Northants (01327 857273).*

POLO

Queen's Cup final. June 14. *Guards' Polo Club, Smith's Lawn, Windsor, Berks (01784 437897).*

Veuve Clicquot Gold Cup final (British Open). July 19. *Cowdray Park, nr Midhurst, Surrey (01730 813257).*

Cartier International. July 26. *Guards' Polo Club.*

British World Challenge. Aug 9. *Guards' Polo Club.*

ROWING

Henley Royal Regatta. Fashion statements at this rowing Mecca along the banks of the Thames are more likely to be made by the colourfully-clad male rowing-club

boats with wonderfully evocative names—Dragons, Darings, Victories, Squibs, Mermaids and Redwings—start off at intervals to the thunder of cannons fired from the castle.

After a hard day's racing there is an even more challenging round of non-stop balls, parties and concerts every night. The regatta lasts eight days and ends with a spectacular firework display.

The recession of the early 90s hit the town hard and left many of the yacht clubs foundering and the marina bankrupt, but Cowes bounced back. Skandia Life, a Southampton-based financial services group came to the rescue three years ago and their sponsorship has helped revive Cowes Week and all who sail in her.

members than by their womenfolk.

July 1-5. *Henley-on-Thames, Oxon (01491 572153).*

SAILING

Skandia Life Cowes Week. Aug 1-8. *Cowes, Isle of Wight (0171-493 2248).*

TENNIS

The four June tournaments give tennis fans a chance to see their idols get in some practice on grass before the big battles on the Wimbledon turf.

Stella Artois Championships (men). June 8-14. *Queen's Club, Palliser Rd, W14 (0171-581 4554).*

DFS Classic (women). June 8-14. *Edgbaston Priory Club,*

Birmingham (0121-605 7000).

Nottingham Open (men). June 15-20. *City of Nottingham Tennis Centre, Nottingham (0115-941 9741).*

Direct Line Insurance

Championships (women). June 16-20. *Devonshire Park, Eastbourne, E Sussex (01323 412000).*

The Championships. June 22-July 5. *All England Club, Wimbledon, SW19 (0181-946 2244).*

ANGELA BIRD



World Cup fever: Will England deliver hope or glory?

Anyone for tennis? Pete Sampras will defend his Wimbledon title this year.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALAN SHARP



OTHER EVENTS

Colour & tradition are two keynotes of the English summer. Flowers rule at Hampton Court, around Covent Garden & in London's private gardens; costumes at the rather noisier Notting Hill carnival are just as multi-hued. For deep-rooted tradition, every visitor to the capital should try to catch one of its heart-stirring military spectacles: **Trooping the Colour**, **Beating Retreat** or the **Royal Tournament**.

Beating Retreat. Spectacular musical performances by massed military bands. Household Division (floodlit event), June 3-4, 9.30pm (booking on 0171-839 5323); Royal Artillery, including pipers & a French army band, June 9-11, 6.15pm (0181-781 3168). *Horse Guards Parade, Whitehall, SW1.*

Antiquarian Book Fair. A larger venue this year to accommodate the 146 top antiquarian booksellers who stock everything from illuminated manuscripts to modern first editions, prints & photographs, June 4-7, 11am-6pm. *Olympia, Hammersmith Rd, W14 (0171-439 3118).*

Gardens Open for Charity. Special evening viewings at some of the 3,500 gardens that open during the summer in aid of the National Gardens Scheme. Among London highlights are: a rose-filled National Trust garden in Hampstead, June 11, 6.30-8.30pm, *Fenton House, Windmill Hill, NW3*; designer Malcolm Hillier's Mediterranean-style haven in Chelsea, June 25, 6-8pm, *101 Cheyne Walk, SW10*; & a garden near Marble Arch, overlooked on all sides by four- to six-storey buildings, July 2, 6.30-9pm, *20A Seymour Buildings, 153-155 Seymour Place, W1.* (Full list for 1998 in the "yellow book"—*Gardens of England & Wales Open for Charity*, NGS, £4.50.)

International Ceramics Fair.

RHS Hampton Court Palace: *The garden show.*

Displays & lectures on fine porcelain, ceramics & glass, plus a loan exhibition of contemporary British studio ceramics, June 12-15. Fri-Sun 11am-8pm; Mon 11am-7pm. *Park Lane Hotel, Piccadilly, W1 (0171-734 5491).* **The Art & Craft of Topiary.** Two one-day courses by Anne Jennings, of the Museum of Garden History, on this intriguing aspect of garden decoration, June 12 & July 2, 11am-4pm. *The Ark, 220 Lambeth Rd, SE1 (booking on 0171-401 8865).*

Asia Week. Seven days of sales, lectures & events relating to the rich & varied arts of Asia—particularly Chinese & Japanese arts, oriental textiles & contemporary Indian paintings, June 12-18. *Sotheby's, 34/35 New Bond St, W1 (0171-293 5000).*

Trooping the Colour. Though the parade itself—this year featuring the colour of the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards—is a tickets-only affair, the procession along The Mall (leaving Buckingham Palace at 10.40am, returning 12.30pm) & spectacular RAF fly-past (1pm) can be enjoyed by all, June 13, 11am. *Horse Guards Parade, SW1 (0171-414 2396).*

Covent Garden Flower Festival. Amid banks of flowers decorating offices & institutions throughout the area, up-&-coming designers offer some alternative, urban looks for town gardens. Plenty of musical & theatrical entertainment for all, June 21-28, 10am-10pm. *Covent Garden area, WC2 (0171-379 7020).*

Royal London Boat

Race. A new event for rowing eights from Army, Navy, RAF & Marines who race along 27 miles of the Thames, pausing at Putney to change crews, & passing under Tower Bridge (where the Pool of London Festival will be in full swing) before reaching the finishing point at Greenwich, July 4, starts 12.45pm; finishes

Getting in on the Art

Where can you go to watch artists creating masterpieces, see displays of Tai Chi or Burmese dancing, and learn the art of pyrography, all in one place? At Art in Action, a four-day event held every summer in the lovely grounds of Oxford's Waterperry House.

Established in 1977 by the Art Department at the School of Economic Science, this annual event for art and craft lovers has grown from a celebration of the best of British to a showcase for international talents. Indeed, there is so much to see and do that, on entering the grounds, the dilemma facing the first-time visitor is where do I start? More than a dozen marquees are spread over the leafy lawns, each dedicated to a particular art or technique. Ceramics, sculpture, calligraphy, Eastern and Islamic arts, textiles, painting, printmaking, glass, metalwork, jewellery and woodwork all vie for attention from over 25,000 visitors.

Try heading, first of all, for the painting marquee, where Royal Academy artist Ken Howard will be working on a figure painting, Tom Coates, president of the Pastel Society, will be sketching fast and furiously, and Desmond Lazaro will be demonstrating the north Indian technique of miniature painting—but on a large scale! "Altogether there will be some 20 painters for people to watch, talk to and buy from," says co-ordinator Brian Wright.

Close by, visitors will find Verena Watson's acclaimed Russian Arts section, showcasing exceptional craftsmen such as jeweller Alexander Tamiane, who carves precious stones into the images he believes are concealed within them. In the Eastern Arts section, organiser

Kenneth Verity says: "This year from India we'll have a demonstration of Kalumkari painting on cloth, using vegetable dyes and brilliant draughtsmanship." There will also be an ikebana artist, from Japan, showing the Zen-inspired way of self-realisation through measured use of flowers, leaves and twigs, and painters from China will present calligraphy, 'Tai Chi and Taoist philosophical oil painting.

Many practical classes offer tuition in painting, batik, copper enamelling, pottery throwing, Raku pottery or silk painting. Most classes are suitable for children. All the materials you need to continue your new hobby at home are for sale in the vast market tent, together with an enticing range of arts and crafts.

After all the activity, relax in the theatre or the music tent, with such delights as Thai and Burmese dancers, Tai Chi, Indian music and Mandarin poetry readings. There's no shortage of refreshments: sip a Pimm's or a glass of wine, have an ice cream or a snack, or visit the Pear Tree restaurant and teashop at Waterperry House. While there, take time to look round Waterperry's gorgeous gardens to round off a perfect day.

Art in Action, July 16-19, Waterperry House, nr Wheatley, Oxon (0171-381 3192). 10.30am-5.30pm.

JULIA PEAREY

Art forms from East and West at Oxford's unmissable four-day Art in Action.





Gothic glory

One of London's most popular and best-loved landmarks, closed to the public since 1983, is emerging in all the glory of its restoration. The removal of the 140,000 feet of scaffolding which has swathed the Albert Memorial for the past eight years is starting from the top downwards and should be completed by October.

First to be revealed will be the cross at the top of the flèche which, like the lead cladding and many of the statues on the upper half, was dismantled to be regilded and embellished with copies of the coloured glass "jewels" found on the original. Below, two tiers of angels and one of Virtues also glow in lustrous gold, as do decorative elements of the copper-bronze foliage, and even Albert himself—whose nearly triple-life-size statue has been covered with 675 twenty-page books of 24-carat gold leaf. Stonework has been cleaned, and missing mosaic tesserae have been replaced with original Salviati-made pieces from the stores of St Mark's Cathedral in Venice, under the supervision of the basilica's chief mosaicist, Giovanni Cucco.

Some £11.5 million have been spent on bringing the memorial back to a state of structural and aesthetic integrity close to the intentions of its designer Sir George Gilbert Scott—considerably more than its original construction bill of £150,000. All the details—of turrets, miniature spires, mythical animals and heraldic symbols—will be more clearly visible than they have



The Albert Memorial sustained over a century of damage from polluted air and acid rain, and it has taken 15 years to restore it to its sumptuously gilded, "jewel"-encrusted, original state.

been since 1915, when the entire edifice was blackened to prevent it glinting in the moonlight and acting as a target for Zeppelins. The memorial is described by Sir Jocelyn Stevens, Chairman of its restorer, English Heritage, as "a gloriously extrovert piece of public sculpture and Victorian craftsmanship".

Designed to commemorate Prince Albert, who died of typhoid in 1861, aged only 42, the memorial is shaped like a huge Gothic reliquary and was completed in 1876. Its site in Kensington Gardens marked the furthest point north of "Albertopolis", the area of Kensington stretching down to the Cromwell Road in the south, which had been bought with the profit made on this Prince Consort's Great Exhibition of 1851 and which came

to house the South Kensington Museums and the Albert Hall.

During this century the Memorial's reputation, as a piece of High Victorian architecture, has passed through the same cycle of distaste and rehabilitation as all things Victorian, although its steps have figured as a playground in every Kensington childhood, which has ensured a constant supply of friends in high places.

English Heritage will complete the restoration by repairing the Parnassus Frieze—169 statues, including Beethoven, Bach, Rembrandt, Shakespeare. Want to make your own mark on the memorial? To "adopt" one of these figures for £1,000 (and thus help complete the restoration) call 0171-973 3799.

ISABEL CARLISLE



approximately 3.30pm. *Hampton Court, Surrey, to Greenwich, SE10 (0171-229 9606).*

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show. Show gardens, floral marquees, water features & the British Rose Festival fill the 25 acres at Cardinal Wolsey's 16th-century palace, for the world's biggest annual flower show. July 7-12. (Tues, Wed RHS members only). Tues-Sat 10am-7.30pm; Sun 10am-5.30pm. Gala Preview, with music & fireworks, July 6. 7-11pm (gala details 0171-630 5999). *Hampton Court Palace, East Molesey, Surrey (ticket hotline 0171-957 4000).*

Doggett's Coat & Badge. A

traditional single-sculls race for up to six competitors, first rowed in 1715. The winner receives a handsomely-decorated scarlet waterman's coat. July 13, starts 1.15pm. *London Bridge to Cadogan Pier, SW3 (0171-626 3531).*

Royal Tournament. The RAF begins its story of man's struggle to fly by "restaging" the creation of the world with lasers & a host of special effects. This year's spectacular show includes such favourites as the field gun competition & the King's Troop musical drive, as well as flights by eagle owls & a replica of Leonardo da Vinci's 16th-century flying machine. July 21-Aug 2; 2pm & 7.30pm (Sun 2pm only; Mon 7.30pm only). *Earls Court, SW5 (booking on 0171-244 0244).*

State Rooms Open. The huge portraits, mirrors & chandeliers seem almost to dwarf visitors to the 19

sumptuously furnished & decorated areas used by the Queen for receiving heads of state & carrying out investitures. Staff are on hand to answer questions. Aug 6-Oct 4. Daily 9.30am-4.30pm. *Buckingham Palace, SW1 (0171-799 2331). Advance booking on 0171-321 2233; tickets on the day from booth in Green Park, SW1.*

Art in the Park. Local artists & craftspeople demonstrate their skills on the theme of nature, appropriate to this 125-acre green oasis & former deer park in a busy London suburb. Other entertainment includes a theatrical performance & a children's art competition. Aug 15, 16. 10am-5pm. *Morden Hall Park, Morden, Surrey (0181-648 1845).*

Notting Hill Carnival. Pulsating music from around 100 bands accompanies the flamboyantly-dressed participants in London's most

colourful event. The first day focuses on children; the second day is the turn of exotically-clad adults. Aug 30, 31. Noon-7pm. *Ladbroke Grove area, W11 (0181-964 0544).*

ANGELA BIRD



Asia Week: Sotheby's are dedicating seven days of sales to arts from the East.



One Woman's Wardrobe

Four years ago Jill Ritblat contemplated her bulging wardrobes and realised that drastic action was needed. Rather than head for Oxfam, however, she picked up the phone and dialled the costume department of the Victoria & Albert Museum. The response was less than enthusiastic says Jill, "until I mentioned my Dior and Ungaro couture!"

Two curators were soon sifting through her cupboards: the result was the V&A's acquisition of its largest-ever single bequest of contemporary clothing. An elegant lady in her 50s, Jill Ritblat trained as a barrister but now sits on the International Council for the Tate Gallery. Her collection of 300 outfits and accessories, dating from the early 1960s, has enabled the V&A to fill in gaps in their already considerable textile and costume collection. "They described it as a fascinating social document and wanted to take everything including socks and hairpins!" she recalls.

The earliest item is a Bellville-Sassoon pillbox hat dating from 1963: other designers represented include Tommy Nutter, Foale & Tuffin, Biba, Armani and Valentino, as well as Chelsea Cobbler and Philip Treacy. Amy de la Haye, Curator of 20th Century Dress, says: "These clothes are a wonderful example of one woman's sartorial requirements over 30 years. The collection ranges from formal to ski-wear, giving a full picture of how fashion has changed in that time. Each piece is in pristine condition."

For the last six months Jill and Amy have co-curated an exhibition, appropriately entitled One Woman's Wardrobe which is displayed within the museum's Dress Collection. Highlights among the 35 outfits include a Dior couture dress, made for Jill's first wedding in 1966 and an Ungaro coat whose fabric resembles a Jackson Pollock painting. Jill refers to her collection affectionately as a "diary": many of her outfits have stories behind them. For instance, she remembers she was seven months pregnant and wearing her Ossie Clark dress when Mick Jagger came over to her in a shop and started chatting her up. Indeed, she has perfect recall of where and how she wore each outfit, enabling her to ensure that it is accessorised correctly and, therefore, provides a complete picture of its time.

There is something of the historian in Jill's approach to

Jill Ritblat's collection at the V&A includes, from top: early-90s, Ungaro Boutique, beige wool jacket and pleated midi-skirt; a mid-70s boob tube; early-80s, Kenzo, appliqué sweater and patchwork skirt; late-60s, Sonia Rykiel, black PVC raincoat with gold clips; early-60s, V de V, ski anorak; early-70s, Biba espadrilles; and, right, Philip Treacy lace hat, 1991.



Jill Ritblat's fashion choices are making history at the V&A.

fashion. And, although she qualified as a barrister at the tender age of 20, it is art history that she calls her passion, a subject she recently returned to university to study.

"I am not a collector myself, but I am an advocate and supporter of modern art," she explains. Jill has co-curated an exhibition with Damien Hirst and in 1996 was executive producer of *Normal Conservative Rebels: Gilbert and George in China*, which won a Gold Medal at the Chicago Film Festival.

Her interest in art is evident in her appreciation of fashion. Favourite pieces include Yves Saint Laurent's Mondrian-inspired dresses from 1965 and his late-80s jackets, one embroidered with sunflowers, another with grapes. Equally, she says, designers such as Issey Miyake "use fabric to create shapes that are as much art as they are fashion".

Before her marriage to John Ritblat, chairman of British Land and one of London's biggest property developers, Jill lived in Switzerland from 1966 for 20 years with her first husband, Elie Zilkha, a member of a wealthy banking dynasty. "European women had a very different approach to fashion from those in England at that time and I learned a lot from them." For 25 years she was faithful to Yves Saint Laurent, and has donated six Le Smoking outfits to the V&A. During the 70s she wore Sonia Rykiel's knitwear and says, "I also loved the English romantics like Zandra Rhodes and the early designs of Kenzo. Now I wear other Japanese designers such as Issey Miyake, Yohji Yamamoto and Comme des Garçons."

Jill's favourite designers today include Shirin Guild, for styles that are "original and comfortable", and Issey Miyake, "because his clothes are so easy to care for", Romeo Gigli and Dries van Noten. Jill has yet to try out all the new British designers. "This winter I bought a suit by Alexander McQueen, which I absolutely love, but while Antonio Berardi and Hussein Chalayan appeal, I've yet to take the plunge."

Jill's legacy to the V & A provides a unique opportunity for fashion lovers to see how one woman's personal taste reflects the changing trends of the second half of the 20th century. And, as Amy de la Haye observes, "it is a radical departure for a museum to show a personal collection, rather than focusing on a theme or individual designer."

Getting Dressed: One Woman's Wardrobe, until October 25, at the Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Rd, SW7 (0171-938 8500).

LUCILLE GRANT





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